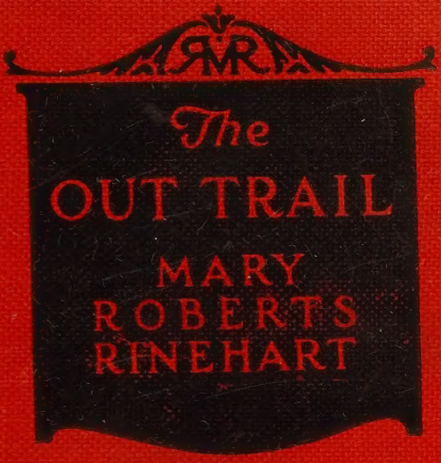
The
OUT TRAIL
MARY
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NOT A SMOKE SIGNAL. FOOD.

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

THE OUT TRAIL

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THE OUT TRAIL. I
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO THE MEMORY OF

HOWARD EATON

". . . the men bulk big on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,

And life runs large on the long trail, the trail that is always new."

—KIPLING'S *L'Envoi*

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ONE: Roughing It with the Men

THE OUT TRAIL

ONE

ROUGHING IT WITH THE MEN

NO woman ever really knows a man until she has camped with him; watched him shave out of doors with the wind blowing his mirror about; seen his reaction to a month of fried food; learned his mental condition when his tobacco is running low—a situation which always reveals a certain avarice; his waking attitude after a night on the ground; and his tolerance or intolerance of mosquitoes, black flies, no-see-'ems, and other wild life in the wilderness.

Equally, no man really knows a woman until he he has seen her under similar circumstances.

Probably an unconscious knowledge of the possibly devastating effects of the intimacy of life in the wilderness is one reason why most men leave their women-kind at home. There are other reasons, of course.

Generally speaking, both sexes are at their best or their worst on the trail. The wilderness is no

half-way ground. Either one belongs or one does not, and one person of either sex who does not can ruin a trip, spread dissension in camp, lose the cook, and fill otherwise peaceful individuals with murderous thoughts.

For those who are in doubt as to their fitness for the open, a small catechism should be prepared and frankly answered. Thus: Can I sleep, eat, and partially dress on the ground? Can I digest fried foods and hot breads for an indefinite period? Can I ride (or hike afoot) long distances without complaint?

Am I unhappy without: (a) telephones; (b) bed sheets; (c) manicures; (d) beefsteaks; (e) mail; (f) table napkins; (g) fresh cream; and (h) a bathroom?

Do I dislike: (a) sunburn; (b) rain; (c) fish; (d) things that crawl; (e) horses; (f) mosquitoes; (g) muscular effort; and (h) nature unadorned by buildings, railroad tracks, and motor cars?

Only after such heart-searching inquisition should the novice venture into the open.

My own novitiate was a series of surprises which came nearer to being shocks. I started West with two trunks, and found I was expected to pack my outfit in a small canvas sack, which held my extra riding boots, two flannel shirts, a jar of cold cream, a sleeping garment, and a

toothbrush. By packing inside the boots, I managed some further articles, but not many. I have now reached that period which marks me as a professional follower of the trail, in that I can in emergency travel with a toothbrush alone; but the process of elimination has taken some years.

I have roughed it with men in one wilderness after another, in camp and on the trail, in the air and on water, in war abroad and in peace at home. A follower and not a leader, I have been scared to death more times than I can remember. I hate high places, bugs, airplanes, and canned food. Led by the exigencies of my profession, by feminine curiosity, or by the determination not to be left at home, I have been shaken, thrown, bitten, sunburned, rained on, shot at, stone-bruised, frozen, broiled, and scared, with monotonous regularity.

I have paid for my experience with square yards of blisters, and a mile or so of scratches. I have eaten a ton of flapjacks and more bacon than is ladylike to remember. I have slept over and across the roots of most varieties of trees from Canada to the Mexican border, and on every variety of rock, sand, and patent bed-roll; in my blood there is something from almost everything that stings, from cactus needles to yellow-jackets; I have bathed in a glacial lake and sat in the mud

of a hot spring in a Mexican canyon to get the soreness out of my aching bones. And my insatiable curiosity about unfamiliar things and places has led me now and again into real danger, from which I have clamored to be extricated with the utmost rapidity and dispatch.

Sometimes these experiments have been peaceful enough, as when I undertook to raise worms for fishing bait. Sometimes they have been desperate, as in the war, when once or twice I got myself into places where I wished violently not to be. Sometimes they have been merely amusing, as when I sat over a hole in the bottom of a canoe in a tropical river, in six inches of water, while a gentleman with a lamp in his hat killed crocodiles by the light reflected from their eyes.

But they do cover a rather wide range: I have risen at 3 A. M., had a cup of coffee at a Childs' restaurant, and gone fishing for salmon before dawn in Puget Sound; have carried a discreet share of the equipment while two male members of my family bumped into trees, et cetera, while portaging a canoe on their heads, on a search for small-mouthed black bass in Canada; have gone after mountain sheep in Mexico, when I never saw a sheep and probably couldn't have hit one if I had; caught my first tarpon in Central America with what I think was a piece of one of Rex Beach's red flannel Alaskan shirts, while Mr.

Beach stood by to gaff the fish; have ridden horseback in the Andes seated on a black bearskin rug which slid off and carried me with it ever and anon; have been skylarked in the air and developed jaundice as a result; have tried skiing in the Alps and suddenly ceased trying; and have sat a horse, doggedly and achingly, on some thousands of miles of trail and mountain pass.

I submit modestly that while there is nothing heroic about this record, I am entitled to a silver cup for variety and endurance. And that the men who have accompanied me are entitled to a gold one.

Every now and then, of course, there has been real danger. Once, riding behind one of the best-known guides in America, across an ice pass, with a two thousand foot drop below, I watched his horse slip off the trail and commence to slide. Only a miracle preserved them both. Again, a young aviator who was taking me up decided to stop for his bathing suit, ten miles away. We descended into what looked like somebody's back yard, and in taking off from there broke our rudder. We landed safely, but we might not. More than once, on some pass or in some perilous mountain chimney, I have felt that eternity was only two jumps behind me and gaining rapidly. But in that I am like the old gentleman who said he

had lived a long life, full of many troubles, most of which never happened.

The difference between the men I have camped with and myself, generally speaking, has been this: They have called it sport; I have known it was work.

I have seen men who at home could not be induced to drive a nail and hang a picture, work at this sport as day laborers used to work. I have seen a soft-handed city gentleman of the spat-wearing, stick-and-glove-carrying variety cheerfully digging an automobile out of a mud hole with a spade, as part of this sport. I have seen a leading member of the bar, with a sweater tied around his waist because he had torn his trousers, cleaning a fish with a gold penknife and afterward frying and eating it. (The fish, not the knife.) Great sport. I have lain in my blankets and seen a procession of Junior Rineharts who couldn't be aroused at home by the three alarms, burglar, fire, and clock, get up at 2 A. M. and steal out of camp, armed to the teeth, to kill a bear, and realized that the chances were fifty-fifty; they would get a bear or it would get them. But the word "sport," sacred to the male, has prevented my calling them back.

But there has been another difference, and that is in physical strength. Perhaps, before I elaborate on this, I should confess that none of my

trips would have been possible had it not been for this physical superiority of the male. Perhaps I should go further and admit that I am the sort of woman who is not afraid of ghosts or lightning, provided there is a good strong man around!

But aside from my personal idiosyncrasy in this direction, I do feel this, as a result of a comparison of the utmost I can do to the utmost of which a man is capable: that there can never be any absolute equality between the sexes. Everything else being equal, superior physical strength always gives the man the advantage.

This leads at once to the question why men do or do not take their women with them into the open. And from that as to why men themselves seek the wilderness is but a step.

About one man in one thousand does so because of an overwhelming love of nature. About one in ten does it because he wants to prove that he is as good a man as he ever was, or, he isn't, to get back to physical fitness. All others do it for one of two reasons: to get away from women, or to take them along as an admiring audience.

I suppose a careful psychoanalysis of the man who takes to the open would reveal one of the variations of the primal herd instinct, plus a complex compounded of Jesse James, Indian tales, cow-puncher movies, and the sort of fiction which

reads: "Above the opened neck band of his flannel shirt rose the bronzed column of his muscular neck. Gun in hand——" But you know the rest.

The successful woman-camper or camp follower should bear this psychology in mind: should realize that camping is a sort of play-acting to the average civilized man, in which he ceases for a time to be the creature of desk and office, the product of barber shop and laundry and the weekly pressing, and is at last the creature of his boyhood dreams, the daredevil adventurer, the stalwart, fearless male. He may not so appear; he may resemble a mild middle-aged gentleman with spectacles and a fishing rod, and no real confidence in the belt to his riding breeches; but there is a glitter in his eye.

And to savor to the full his transformation, to watch him land a fish or put up a tent, to see him shoot at an empty condensed milk can, there should be an audience. Hence, women in camp and on the trail.

It is perfectly true that each year parties of men shake the dust of the feminine world from their feet, take with them disreputable clothing, a side of bacon, some potatoes and flour, and sitting in the Pullman car grin at each other at their escape. It's a man's world, just then. It remains a man's world for about three days. Then, just as they are ready for admiration, they find merely

competition. The only thing they have gained is that they need not shave. They have no audience.

At the exact end of the stipulated time, if not sooner, they burst out of the wilderness as if fired out of a gun, seek, first, a broiled beefsteak; second, a barber to straighten the hair they have been trimming with the nail scissors, and, third, a woman to boast to about it.

If a woman will but take care of herself in camp, and will remember that her function is "for to admire and for to see," she need never actually labor. I have learned this very thoroughly.

Had I commenced to rough it with men early in life, I might have been a different sort of camper. But I commenced in full maturity, and after considerable thought. Contrary to the general belief that I am a muscular and rather hard-bitten woman, who sails into a camp site and puts up the tents with one hand while unsaddling horses and cooking supper with the other, my part of any expedition ends when I accompany it and take care of myself.

This rule, carefully impressed on the males of the party, enables me to make hard marches and to be a calm and admiring audience at the end of the day. I know women who have been less foresighted, who have made the initial error of learning how to put up a tent and how to cook over a sheet-iron stove eight inches high. I knew

one once who made delectable biscuit in a reflector oven, and for months on end in the summer her life was just one biscuit after another. She became entirely bent over from the camp stove and, from the wood smoke, at the end of the season her skin resembled that of a well-cured ham.

I, too, can make biscuits in a reflector oven, but no member of my outfit has ever suspected it. Nor ever shall.

I remember a honeymoon couple in one of the National Parks. They were hiking, and the bride carried her share of the load on her shoulders. In the evening when they made camp, the groom at once set about the heavy work of fishing for the supper trout, while she put up the little silk tent, spread the blankets, chopped wood, built a fire, made the coffee, cooked potatoes, baked biscuit, unpacked the duffle bags and just generally idled around. When supper was over he rested and she washed the dishes.

But, generally speaking, the male is ready enough to take the heavy end on his camping trips with women. Actually, he likes to feel big and strong and protective. He won't stand for the nuisance woman; he doesn't want to be bothered with her. He likes to attend to the fundamentals and to have a woman around the camp fire at night while he is heating a stone to warm his blankets and describing the way he caught a cer-

tain fish. But he doesn't want to be *bothered* with her. In his attitude to women he is like the slovenly-dressed woman of whom it was said that she looked as though she said to her clothes: "Well, clothes, I am going downtown. If you want to come along, hang on."

But few women are "nuisance women" in the open. The women of that sort do not go. They remain at home or at summer resorts, within easy reach of a hair-dresser, manicure, and four for bridge. Their idea of roughing it is nine holes on a golf course or dismissing the motor and walking to a luncheon. When lured into the wilds they yawn at the greatest works of God and scream if a field mouse snuggles up to them for warmth at night. Like the male grumblers, they are not wanted on the trail.

In addition to my purely decorative qualities in a camp, I have been assured by the men with whom I am most familiar that I have a certain advantage over them, after all is said and done. In the mornings, for instance, all I have to do is to rise from the ground; examine the various imprints left on me by roots, small stones, and biting insects; bathe out of a tin basin holding a pint of icy water, while the packers wait outside to take down the tent; put on the essentials, so that I may emerge into the open; drag on riding boots, of which I have lost the boot hooks; and then,

comb, brush, hairpins, hair net, hand mirror, cold cream, powder, toothbrush and tooth paste in hand, escape as the tent crashes behind me, and finish my dressing in the open.

The men have to shave.

It is generally believed that the necessity for labor is the primal curse of the masculine portion of the world's population. But that was long ago, before some ingenious gentlemen with a double clam shell began pulling out his beard and setting the fashion of the hairless face. Since that time, the curse has been the daily shave.

No woman really knows a man until she has watched him shave. No woman ever holds a man if she borrows his razor for any purpose whatever. The bathroom shelf which holds the tools of shaving is an altar, and the act itself a rite. A good many honeymoons have ended prematurely because the lady in the case spoke to the gentlemen when he had blown out one cheek in order to shave the space between the nostril and the corner of the mouth.

So, with a woman in camp, life is difficult for the men in this one particular: They have to shave. Outside of that life is comparatively simple for them. The wrangler, rolled in his blankets under the sky, opens an eye at the cook's call, sits up, puts on his hat, squirms out of his blankets, stamps into his boots, and is dressed. The cook

does the same, but does not put on his hat. The rest of the male portion of the party has slept in its undergarments, socks, and flannel shirt, and with three gestures, one for each boot and one for its breeches, is clothed. *But* it has to shave.

To offset this disadvantage, which I acknowledge, there is, however, a certain gain in having a woman along, and this is in the matter of food. The menu for an exclusively male camping trip is frequently as follows:

BREAKFAST: Bacon or fish, fried potatoes, baked beans and coffee.

LUNCHEON: Bacon or fish, fried potatoes, baked beans and coffee.

DINNER: Bacon or fish, fried potatoes, baked beans and coffee.

A woman will stand for such a program just so long, and then she rebels. After one experience she will herself order the provisions. She will not, of course, exercise any supervision over the cook, if the outfit carries one. Compared with the domestic variety, the camp cook is a cyclone and the latter a June breeze. I have known of camp cooks who erected a barricade of ropes around the stove to keep women away, and a hint is a hint the world over.

But a woman will see that there is a certain variety in the food provided. I have not catered

to a family of males for —— years without knowing that happiness lies partly in the heart and partly in the region to the south of it. Also that men who toy with their food are very few. Indeed, to a woman who has fed a growing family of the male persuasion, sooner or later comes the wonder as to where the heart and lungs find space for operation. Unlike the little boy who said that the trunk was divided into two parts: the upper contained the heart and lungs, the lower the vowels, a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes w and y.

And the theory that a camping party, like an army, can live off the country, I have personally exploded. My admiration for the American Indian has grown by leaps and bounds since my wilderness experience; but I am more and more convinced that had it not been for his dietetic limitations we would not now own America. No one can fight on a diet of berries and roots—except a camper. Try *him* on it, and see!

I take all the extras, jams and fruit, cake, chocolate, eggs, cheese, sweet crackers, sirup, canned vegetables, meats, and fish. I confess freely, however, that I have never gone to the lengths of that party in the high Sierras whose hair-raising report of exploration I read last night, and which says in one place:

"On returning to camp we had an excellent din-

ner, ending with one of Mrs. ——'s celebrated tapioca puddings." Later on, after a frightful day spent in getting the outfit to a snow-filled pass, the narrator airily mentions raspberry sherbet as a light refreshment.

I have never carried an ice-cream freezer, but it is a thought to play with.

I have now a vivid memory of a trip into the Mexican desert during the war. Another woman and myself took it, and our original idea was to go alone with a Mexican guide as cook and packer. But south of the border was a mysterious and rather hostile place in those days, and little by little the party grew. The Revenue Department firmly added a border officer; the American Army gave us another as guide and interpreter. The Mexican governor, not to be outdone, added two Mexican officers and a guard of five *rurales,* armed to the teeth and looking like Villa's army.

The modest stock of provisions we had provided for a four-weeks' horseback trip a hundred and fifty miles from the nearest grocery store seemed to shrink and shrink. The loads of the two mules provided as pack animals, and waiting in the sun of that little Mexican street, would have fed our young army for four days and no more. Hastily, Miss Evans and I counted our money. Hurriedly we recrossed the border, where as a touch of local color one of our troopers

was shooting at a Mexican as we passed. And grimly did we buy out the local grocery store and demand from the governor five more mules.

Our party of three and a mule had become a party of thirteen people, thirteen horses, and seven mules! I am willing to admit that the precautions for our safety had by that time slightly undermined our enthusiasm, and that we hoped feverishly until the last moment that one of us would receive a telegram forbidding the trip, or that the Government would recall us. Not at all. As a sort of last hope, I demanded a permit to import weapons into Mexico, a forbidden thing; but even that failed, for the permits were granted. And I moved into the Mexican desert like an armored tank, revolver on hip, rifle and shotgun strapped to my saddle.

Considering the heat of the desert and the amount of ammunition I carried, I do not yet know why I did not explode.

That trip was trying in many ways: We had taken no tents, desiring nature in all its purity and freshness. But we had forgotten that the desert has purity and freshness, but not much else. There was an almost total lack of those shrubs, et cetera, enclosed in which we had intended to locate our sleeping quarters and dressing-room. When, as on one or two occasions, we did find a thicket it was discovered to maintain

consistently the unfriendly characteristic of the desert, where everything that grows either jags or scratches.

It thus became necessary for us to sleep in most of our clothing—less of a hardship than appears on the surface, for the temperature, which was only slightly below the boiling point all day, fell at night to thirty or less. Also, at more or less frequent intervals, it rained. No one is actually acquainted with rain who has not lain shelterless, face up to the sky, in a Mexican cloudburst. Those who know rain only from under an umbrella or a roof are mere rain amateurs. Until one has slept so, or has ridden all day in it, and can empty one's riding boots like pouring water out of a pitcher, or has heard it pour off the rim of a hat like the edge of a roof with a tennis ball in the drain pipe, one is not a rain professional.

One stormy night on that trip I saved a family of rattlesnakes from drowning. I suppose they never knew it. Probably no rattlesnake father ever says to his children: "On the night of the great rain a kind woman saved us all, and covered us with her own body, that we might survive."

But it was even so.

We had camped in a cañon, and had retired from the Mexican Army, as was our custom, to a distant spot. There we laid out our bed-rolls on the ground and crawled into them. But simul-

taneously with the first drops of rain on my upturned face came the unmistakable aroma of rattlesnakes. Hasty examination with a flash light revealed the hole, directly beneath my bed-roll. Naturally, our first impulse was to run. To run and run, clear to the border and the dear old U. S. A. But I had read somewhere that the rattlesnake can move rapidly; that indeed some snakes can take their tails into their mouths, secure a firm hold and thus, forming a hoop, move with incredible rapidity.

There was no time to lose. Swiftly I crawled into my bed-roll in such a position that the heaviest portion of me lay over the hole, and there, in a downpour which left us at dawn two small and pathetic islands in a lake of water, kept those rattlesnakes snug and warm—and innocuous—until morning.

[*Editor's inquiry on above paragraph: Please explain just how this procedure rendered them innocuous?*

Author's answer: The mattress was three inches thick. A rattler's fangs are one-half inch long.]

That trip was a liberal education in more ways than one. It was filled with small discomforts and larger anxieties, which left small lines of strain in Miss Evans' face and in mine. But the men were calm and cheerful. And this is one of the

main distinctions between men and women in the open. The man's physical strength makes him feel that he can cope with any emergency. The woman has to rely largely on her moral fiber and her nervous energy.

After forty-five miles of plodding one day in deep sand, fourteen hours of what became agony at the end, I got out of my saddle to fall prostrate under the horse. But the men made camp, carried water to us from the water hole, unsaddled and turned out the horses, and got the supper, without a mention of fatigue.

They were a valiant band of stage brigands, that army of ours. We felt safer when we learned that, although they had carbines and shells, they were not supposed to use them. Ammunition was very scarce in Mexico. But they fell by the wayside when at last, after ten days of hard going, we reached a tiny Mexican coast town. The program, briefly outlined to us, was this: They were to be allowed to drink on Saturday evening and Sunday, for it had been a long drought. And Sunday evening their officers were to put them in the guardhouse so they would be sober for the start on Monday morning.

And this program was carried out, with one unexpected deviation: For on Monday morning, with our procession mounted and ready, led by the town band, to ride out of town, the com-

mander of the garrison arrived followed by a boy with a basket and politely and smilingly distributed to each and every member of the party, *rurales* included, one quart bottle of that intoxicant which will turn a canary bird into a vulture —mescal whisky.

Late that night, and seven hours behind us, the army rode into camp, sodden and dejected. The packs were awry on the mules' backs, the *rurales* reeled in their saddles, and there was not an ounce of mescal left among them. Their officers looked them over, smiled, and shrugged their shoulders. It was. That was all.

Yes, I have done my bit in the open, and I am not through yet. It is a habit that sticks. I dare say when I am a little old lady who should be knitting by the fireside, the craving will come over me as it does now, and they will lift me to the back of a horse and take me along for the same reason they do now—because I won't stay at home. And I shall sit by a trout stream while the others work, as I do now, and admire and admire and admire.

Midsummer of next year will see us in the high Sierras, if all goes well, and once again we shall sleep on the hard ground and find it soft. And again, as in the years gone by, I shall be the camp parasite: I shall toil not, neither shall I spin. But I shall be among those present when, at the end

of the long day's march, somebody else has made the camp and cooked the food. And when, as night falls, and the crests of the mountains turn from gold to pink and then to lavender, and the group of men is gathered around the camp fire, I shall be there to listen to their tales and to applaud.

I shall be the audience!

TWO: The Dude Ranch

TWO

THE DUDE RANCH

THE war was over long enough for the various uniforms in the family to be laid away in trunks and chests, from which to emerge, smelling more of moth-balls than of gunpowder, for parades and Decoration day. And spring house-cleaning time had come, at which stressful period it is my duty to go into the storeroom and secretly burn or give away those various articles which my family, which is largely masculine, is always saving against some future need—odd boots, for a one-legged mendicant presumably, old caps, pictures with the glass broken, expired railway-schedules, broken fishing-rods——

Broken fishing-rods! I sat on a storeroom chair with a broken rod in my hands, and I recalled a number of things—such as clear mountain-streams and pine trees and wriggling trout, which, later, were to change to sizzling trout. And then I got the agent's photograph of a house on the New England coast, a large house with I forget how many master's bedrooms, and a billiard-room in one wing, and a golf-links in the back yard.

The more I looked at the picture of the house the more civilized it seemed to me—the more dress-every-evening-for-dinner, the more play-bridge-on-the-veranda-every-afternoon. And suddenly I knew I couldn't bear it. I would have to get into the wilderness again.

Loud whoops of joy met my decision that evening at the dinner-table, and by midnight the orderly shelves of the storeroom resembled those of a rummage sale after a highly successful day. But it is well to say here that my idea had been accepted with a reservation. The work, according to the council, had tired me. Therefore, I was not immediately to mount some patient animal and, fishing-rod and rain-coat on the cantle of my saddle, and pack-train with food and tents behind, lead my little procession to divers sunny Western peaks, trout-streams, mosquitoes, trails, and sloughs that I wot of. I was first to go to "the ranch."

The West is full of ranches, but to us there is just "the ranch." It is not our ranch, save by right of affection and that modest sum which places it at our disposal—horses, corral, trout-stream, mountains, cañons, and cow-punchers—for such periods as we choose. It is, indeed, for the truth must out eventually, what is locally known as a "dude" ranch.

Its name does not mean that it is run in a dud-

ish manner, this particular one being indeed owned and managed by a group of sun-browned gentlemen who are of the old quick-shooting, ride-all-day-and-any-horse variety—gentlemen to whom a rope is to hang things with and to catch horses, rather than for wash-day purposes. No. A dude ranch is one which, during nine months of the year, raises alfalfa, horses, cows, punchers, wranglers, and prices for beef on the hoof. And for three months of that time takes Eastern livers and Eastern nerves, at so much per liver or nerve, and, by putting their possessors in the saddle, so distracts their attention to other parts of their bodies that they almost at once forget the aforesaid L. and N.

Words travel west, like Horace Greeley's young man. We still have in currency some words that England has forgot. And so, some years ago, the word "dude" crossed the Mississippi, struck the Lewis and Clark trail, and found it liked Wyoming. To the Northwestern cow-man, anything from east of the river is a dude. He is, however, not a dude on his own side of the bank. It is when he is transplanted that he becomes one. The dude, then, is a man temporarily without a country, and known by the following hall-marks:

He wears full-cut riding-breeches.
He smokes machine-made cigarettes.

He calls the men of the outfit "cowboys."

He makes invidious comments about Western saddles.

He believes—correctly—that all range-horses will buck sometime or other.

He paid eighty-five dollars for his trout-reel.

He rises in the saddle to the trot.

Probably no one of his markings renders him so liable to scorn and contempt as this last one. The Western man does not rise. He sits tight, and I would personally give a fair amount to know how he does it.

I have two outdoor faults. I lift my head at golf and my body on a Western horse. For the head-lifting, I am considering an appliance of which one end is tied to the belt and the other gripped firmly in the teeth, but for the rising to the trot, I have no hope whatever. I have tried the dangling method, by which one's feet are out of the stirrups entirely, and the gripping method, by which one's knees hold the animal in a death-strangle until they develop a species of paralysis. I have tried holding myself down with a hand on the saddle-horn. But the plain truth is that, with every effort, I go up as fast as the horse does, but come down more slowly.

So long as I have this fault, the result of expensive Eastern training, so long as I post the

trot, I shall be a dude. No long and worthy record of pack-train trips, of mountain-work, of nights on the ground, of bacon and flap-jacks will remove the stigma.

The council, then, had decided on the ranch first. After that, we had in contemplation the further excursion of which these chapters shall treat, one of seven hundred miles through the desert in Arizona and New Mexico. But the ranch was to come first.

Truth to tell, there was a reason for selecting the ranch first, aside from my work-weariness. To it, early in the spring, had hied a certain member of the family, young and active, who had gone, not as a boarder but as a ranch-hand, and who was, while his family luxuriated in true Eastern idleness, rising at 4 A. M. and doing divers other extraordinary things, such as wrangling horses, branding calves, and sledging stone.

A certain curiosity, not unmixed with pride, to see the ranch and this member of the family on such undudish terms was very potent.

On a summer afternoon, therefore, the tenderfoot part of the family arrived at a small railway station at the foot of the Big Horn Mountains, in Wyoming. For some time, we had been approaching the mountains, and that call which they never lose to those who have fought and conquered them was very strong. Always the moun-

tains rest me, even when they frighten me. Always lonely, always vast and still, the first light of day and the last is theirs. To those that love them, each peak is a finger which beckons and calls, and even in their shadows there is peace.

The mountain air was pungent and cool. On the platform, we drew long breaths and looked around. Ahead, the baggage-car was unloading the bed-rolls and those vast trunks which were necessitated by the fact that every member of the party had brought the accumulated outing stuff of a dozen years. And on the platform was the undudish member of the family.

That is, after a brief time we recognized him.

Not then, nor at any time since, have I found any trace of the smart equipment with which this particular member of the family had started west —the corduroy riding-breeches, the neat riding-shirts, the polished boots, the ties and handkerchiefs. They went, like last year's flowers, and on the platform was a sun-burned individual who wore, reading from the top down,

One ancient Stetson hat,
One purple neckerchief,
One blue-calico shirt,
One pair of California pants,
One pair cow-puncher's boots,
One pair spurs.

Perhaps the California pants will bear explaining. First of all, they are called "pants," not "trousers." Second, they are of extremely loud color and pattern, and are not made on the curvilinear, as are riding-breeches, but on the straight, as are gas-pipes. Third, they tuck into boots. Fourth, they will withstand any horse, saddle, thorn, bur, and weather.

The boots, too, will bear looking at. The cow-puncher's boots are made to ride in, not to walk in. I have seen men in our outfits who would get on a horse to go a hundred feet for water. And the reason is simple. The boot has a high heel which slopes forward, and which gives the wearer a purchase on stirrups or ground when he has a rope on a fractious horse. Aside from the heel, the boot is chiefly notable for several yards of machine-stitching in various ornate designs, for durability, and for being generally coated either with mud or with dust.

Picturesque as is the cow- or horse-man's attire in the range country, it is not selected for that quality, but for its practicality. His high-crowned, broad-rimmed hat shades his eyes and stays on in the wind; his neckerchief, instead of a collar, gives him freedom and room to breathe; his vest, worn over a shirt frequently in place of a coat, gives warmth without hampering his arms; his stout trousers and high-heeled boots are for

the purposes I have related, and his chaps, when he wears them, are to protect his clothing from briers and general rough usage.

That night, we slept in a row on a back veranda of our little cottage, and directly underneath a trout-stream roared and laughed at us. Laughed, because it could see, on a stand near the edge, the eleven trout-reels and eight rods, the flies and extractors and fish-knives and landing-nets and stringers and creels and artificial grasshoppers with which we meant to fool it. And did not!

Now a dude ranch, at least the ranch of which I am speaking, is not a single house. It is about the size of a small town. During the height of the season, one hundred and fifty assortments of recovering overworked nerves and sluggish livers will be found at one time housed in tiny cottages or tents.

There are two costumes constantly seen. One is Eastern riding-clothes, modified in an attempt to disguise the owner's essential dudishness by Stetson hats, neckerchiefs, and spurs. Spurs, however, are a dangerous experiment to any rider whose instinct in trouble is to embrace his horse's stomach with his feet. The other costume has no hour and any hour. It is donned in the privacy of one's hut, and appearance in it is preceded by anxious glances up and down the neighboring rows of cottages. It consists of a

dressing-gown and slippers, a bath-towel slung over the left arm, and soap, sponge, shaving-materials, if the wearer be a male, and fresh undergarments in the right hand. As the left is comparatively free, in case of a high wind it is used to hold the dressing-gown together in lieu of hooks or buttons.

But all precautions sometimes fail. Crossing a small stream on a board one day, while thus attired, and being simultaneously assailed with ribald laughter from a concealed group and a gust from a mountain breeze, I lost my best toilet-soap and one slipper in the stream.

The ranch is at its best in the morning. Toward the corral, before eight o'clock, go long lines of booted, quirted, and breeched people of both sexes to write their names down for a horse that morning. "No name, no horse," is the ranch rule. And always I had, until this time, taken it for granted that my horse, along with two hundred or so others, would be in the corral behind the barn, waiting for my name to be sung out.

Not that he came when he heard my name. On the contrary. But my name was the signal for the corral boss or his assistant to ride, rope in hand, into that maelstrom of whirling, nipping horseflesh, single out my animal, throw a rope over his head, and then drag him out to where

the saddle boss stood ready, with his assistants, to go through with the following motions:

1: Put a bit between two tightly clenched sets of large, cannibal-looking teeth.

2: Throw on the saddle-blanket while the horse tries to get out from under it.

3: Heave on the heavy saddle while the horse tries to step on his foot.

4: Cinch the saddle.

5: Listen to my complaints about the saddle, and,

6: Lead the horse unostentatiously to a sloping place, so I may leap on his back as I am shown doing in moving pictures and various photographs.

But that certain member of my family who shall be nameless, owing to joshing at college and other things, this year enlightened me. It appears that the business of getting my horse under the saddle, and the combination of both under me, is the culmination of a long process, which commences before dawn.

Indeed, the first steps are taken the night before, as follows:

When the bunch is turned out at evening into the high mountain pastures to feed, a certain number are retained in a small near-by field. Called "night-horses," these are for the wran-

gler's use the next morning, when the entire outfit of perhaps three hundred or more horses must be collected in the uplands and driven down to the corral.

At four in the morning or thereabouts, the corral boss turns over in bed, yawns, and then rouses the men. In gloomy silence, the wranglers dress, put on chaps and gloves—for your cowpuncher or horse-wrangler wears gloves to protect his hands from the lariat—and proceed to the barn. There some unlucky one is selected to go afoot into the near-by pasture and wrangle in the night-animals.

"At that hour," says my well-spring of information, "the horses are like the men, cold, stiff, and a bit fractious. They are walked about for a moment before mounting, and not allowed to canter or trot for some time. If they are not carefully approached, also, they will buck."

The wranglers ride up the mountainside, perhaps to eight thousand feet. All around, the horses are feeding and pretending to ignore the men. Riding outside them, the wranglers throw them gradually toward the center and then haze them into bunches. They stand there, close-herded in the mountain mist, while from every direction come the low, monotonous whistlings of the herders and their calls.

"Ki-uck!" is one man's signal to them. "Hit-

haw!" calls another. The cries are sharp, like the cracking of a whip. The horses, now playful, now vicious and nipping at each other, fall into the long parallel trails that lead down toward the lowlands. Nose to tail, they move along, and above the thunder of their hoofs is the roar of the river in the cañon. The men take off their gloves and blow on their fingers. The glow of the first sunlight is in their faces, and far beneath they can see the smoke from the cook-house chimney. It is a new day.

After breakfast come to the corral the lazy livers and tired nerves, the overweights and underweights, and also those sane and normal people who come to the ranch because they love to ride the mountain trails up steep cañons to meadows painted bright with flowers. And the new-comers sit or stand meekly, waiting for their fate in the shape of a horse. They take what they get, for the corral boss and his outfit run the horse-matter on their own lines, and brave indeed is the man who disputes them. There are no frills. You get your horse and saddle and get on. By the way you get on, you are placed. There is never anything but courtesy, but it is the gently patronizing courtesy of the horseman toward the dude.

"What's your name?" says George or Bill or some other corral autocrat, pad and pencil in hand.

The big banker, who has decided notions as to the sort of horse he intends to ride, draws himself up somewhat.

"Smith," he says.

"That all? We've got six Smiths here."

"Alfred E. Smith," says the banker stiffly. But the name, which would create a sensation in some cities, means nothing here.

"Know how to ride?"

"I haven't ridden for some time. I want a horse that——"

"Hey, Jack!" bawls the young man with the pencil, pad, the green neckerchief, and, as likely as not, somewhere behind him a university training. "Rope Sowbelly for Alfred Smith."

Alfred E. Smith, somewhat later, finds himself standing beside an animal which does not attract his eye. He is, we will say, a tall, gangling, brutal-looking horse, and he wears no curb-bit. Also, he has got into the wire somewhere, and he is scarred in various neat designs. The banker lowers his voice.

"He looks vicious," he says.

"'Vicious!' What, old Sowbelly! Why, all the kids ride him."

"I'd like a curb, in case he bolts."

"'A curb!' What've you got legs for?" asks Bill. "Sowbelly doesn't know how to buck. But if you notice him getting his head down between

his legs, which is a sort of preliminary symptom, you pull him up. That's all."

The result of which instruction is that each time Sowbelly attempts to brush a fly off his fore legs, his head is dragged up by a frenzied gentleman who believes he is staring death in the face.

But now a curious thing begins to happen. After a day or two, Alfred E. Smith begins to like Sowbelly. He has stopped watching his ears and has begun to see the scenery, and he finds that the horse is willing, intelligent, and sure-footed. Once or twice, on level places, he has let Sowbelly have his head, and instead of smacking the saddle, Mr. Smith finds that he is being carried along on the wings of morning in a sort of rocking-chair.

On the third day, he takes Sowbelly in, and asks if he can have a few oats for him. On the fourth day, he steals some sugar from the dining-room, sugar, which, by the way, Sowbelly scorns. On the fifth day, he takes off his own saddle and examines certain portions of Sowbelly's anatomy for cinch-sores.

By the time he leaves, he is fairly maudlin about Sowbelly. He takes a long ride alone, that last day, and now and then he pats Sowbelly's scarred neck. He believes the horse is fond of him, and he wonders how it would do to partition off a part of the garage at home and ship Sow-

belly east. On the last afternoon, he gets a camera and takes the horse's picture. Also, he is photographed on the horse. And, finding that a young woman is to follow him on Sowbelly's back, he takes her aside and talks to her earnestly about not running him up a hill, and seeing that his back is dusted before the saddle goes on.

We had a Sowbelly in the family one year.

The names of Western horses, of all horses, for that matter, are amusing. One summer, for instance, I rode, in succession, Highball, Budweiser, Brandy, and Cheerio. This last year, however, in deference to the prohibition amendment and probably to my occupation, I was given Ink-Spot. Later on, I rode Nig, a fine big black, with a disconcerting habit of toying innocently with his bit until he got it in his front teeth. That accomplished, it was Nig's habit to go somewhere with extreme rapidity. In those cases, when it seemed best to go along, owing to a lack of soft places to fall off in, I sometimes succumbed to that crowning ignominy of clutching the saddle-horn while I remonstrated with Nig in calming tones and tried to steer him away from gopher-holes. Sooner or later, he would stop, having had his run, and I would look behind at the rest of the party and pretend I had wanted a little run.

It is a curious thing concerning these ranch-

horses that accidents are practically unknown. The junior member of the family was bucked off the first day, described a neat arc in the air, and fetched up abruptly some little distance from his animal, which merely watched him with a certain interest but no concern. Yet these horses are only ridden a brief part of every year. They winter on the range, fending for themselves in the high pastures, and are brought down in the spring to be broken for the summer. There are amazingly few of them with any vicious tendencies. Children of five and six ride them day after day, elderly women who have never sat a horse before, timid Eastern gentlemen, and young boys. Yet of real trouble there is none.

Now and then, however, there comes to the ranch some Easterner who flagrantly abuses his horse. At first, the corral remonstrates. Then, if that fails, the guilty one is refused a horse, and in no uncertain terms. Sometimes the fault is through ignorance; sometimes it is willful. A young boy killed a horse one year by tying him with a slip-noose on the edge of a steep bank and leaving him. When he got back, the horse had fallen over and strangled to death.

The weeks went on. Frontier day was approaching, and still we had not gone fishing. Then, one sunny afternoon, I got out my rod and reel, my penknife, for cutting the hook out of my

clothing, my trout-flies, and a surreptitious can of worms, for worms are not entirely ethical in the profession of trout-catching.

Alone, and ever and anon catching my rod in underbrush, I wandered to those upper reaches near the cañon from which an Omaha gentleman was returning each day with heavy spoil. To reach these pools, it was necessary to slide and fall down a steep cliff-like place, carrying in my teeth as much of my impedimenta as was possible. Half-way down, I spilled the worms. Two-thirds of the way down, I wrenched a knee. All the way down, I miscalculated the strength of the bank and fell in.

Now, any fisherman will know that the only way to catch trout is to surprise them. To startle no birds. To frighten no butterflies. To stalk the stream like an Indian stalking his prey. Crawling, creeping, hiding, the true fisherman at last takes up his stand behind a rock, and there, unseen and unsuspected, drops his brilliant-colored fly on the surface in such a manner that the fish below will think the fly is committing suicide.

But I have my own method. First of all, I select a comfortable rock to sit on, overlooking the pool. Then I select my fly and fasten it to the line by a method which has been known to turn fishermen pale in the face. Then, having

unwound considerable line and having got it tangled in my shoe-hooks, I am ready to cast. I then hopefully snap my pole, and watch for the suicidal fly to rest lightly on the surface of the pool. But it does not. Brief examination finds it in one of two places—either in the brush behind me or between my shoulders in the garment I am wearing. I have, incidentally, been known to catch the lobe of an ear.

Repeated attempts, however, at last bring the fly to rest on the surface of the water. Now and then, something takes it. Mostly, it does not. I have a habit, after it has floated undisturbed for some time, of letting it run with the rapid current to some promising pool below. After that I sit and wait, fighting mosquitoes the while, and at last reel in. I cannot reel in. Investigation reveals my fly caught under a rock in an inch and a half of water.

On this particular afternoon, I went through with my usual program, with the addition of almost sitting on a snake. And I caught nothing. Below me, great trout leaped in the air for miserable little gnats of no gastronomic value whatever, while my brilliant flies, my imitation grasshopper, and my fat worms floated disdained. Trout before my very eyes left their under-rock homes, went out and visited, had some small refreshment, and went home again.

At last I had a strike. I gasped, jerked, and reeled in. I had him! He was beautiful. He was spotted and beautiful. He lay on the rock and panted. Then he gave a flop and fell back into the water again.

On the way home, I met a ranch employee with six fish strung on a stick. I admired them, and he gave them to me. Later, when asked what bait I used, I merely said I had smiled at them.

But we were to get fish. Came one day a man with a statement that there was a lake, called Dome Lake, some nine thousand feet in elevation and some distance away, and that thereon or near by was a fishing club, which extended its piscatorial privileges to four of us.

According to the statement, the lake was overflowing with fish, so that there was hardly room for water in it, and the fish took turns at the surface to look for food. Also there would be food and beds, and pleasant club members to show on boards the outlines of such trout as are the reason why a man keeps on fishing through a long lifetime.

"When you say 'some distance,' what do you mean?" I asked warily.

"Oh, forty or fifty miles."

"On horseback?"

"Surely."

"Mountain miles or regular miles?" I persisted.

"Regular mountain miles."

"And we climb five thousand feet, and do it all in one day?"

"Now, see here," said the person who had brought the invitation, "this is a real lake and real fish. If you're going to back out because it's hard to get to——"

"I don't think my horse can stand it," I said feebly.

But I went, in the end.

At four in the morning, we rose from our beds and dressed—like Stevenson's lines:

> In winter I get up at night
> And dress by yellow candle-light.

Then, while the Head carried the fishing-tackle, I wrapped up in my slicker the following articles:

One *robe de nuit,*
One tooth-brush *et cetera,*
One can sardines,
One box crackers,
One small cheese,
One jar cold-cream,
One bottle pickles,
Eight hard-boiled eggs,
One comb,
One jar salmon eggs,
Four cakes chocolate.

The reason for the food was this: One member of our party was sure he knew a short cut. It is my invariable rule, when anyone knows a short cut, to take food along.

Long before the ranch was awake, we had breakfasted on fried ham, wheat cakes, and coffee. And in the gray dawn we started up the cañon trail. The brawling stream on our left, we climbed the steep and rocky trail, two thousand feet of rise and of solid effort, to where, in the upland meadows, great herds of cattle stood among the flowers. The sun came up, and the snow-topped mountains which were our destination seemed very, very far away.

Back into the wilderness we pushed, through green valleys rimmed with gray cliff walls, fording streams, surprising a deer, losing the tiny trail in some creek bed or valley and finding it again. Now and then I stopped, ostensibly to look at the view, but, really, to rest. For the slow gait of a horse on a dangerous trail is a racking one, and every twist of a climbing animal is a twist for its rider.

So, all day long we rode and climbed, and, at last, we came to a real ford. It looked a simple matter, but that ford was a delusion and a snare. Our horses knew. They reared and whirled, and so did the icy water from the snow peaks. But we kicked them into it, and in an instant I was

sitting in the center of that polar stream, with only my horse's head out of water, while my riding-boots and my pockets filled, while a terrible rigor shook my spinal column, and while the aforementioned *robe de nuit et cetera* wilted and drowned.

At last we were out, and about to empty our boots, when over the Head's face came a terrible look.

"Great Scott!" he said.

"Build a fire or something," I demanded, ignoring him, and with a shade of sharpness in my voice. "This is what comes of short cuts."

But the Head of the family was paying no attention to me. He was eying the stream while his teeth chattered.

"I've got to go back," he said bitterly. "I've left that damned bag of mine on the other side."

And back he went, to the jeers and jibes of our shivering group on the bank.

On and on, and up and up. Five thousand feet we climbed, and innumerable miles we covered. I sat sidewise in the saddle; I sat with a leg over my horse's neck; I sat with the other leg over my horse's neck; I stood in my stirrups; I rode without stirrups; I developed Mark Twain's celebrated combination of rheumatism and St. Vitus's dance. And then——

Was it a building? It was a building. Was

that a lake? Yes. And fish making those concentric circles? Again, yes.

Forgotten were our aches, our wet clothing, our sodden handkerchiefs and matches and cigarettes, our mosquito-bites and brush-scratches. Fish!

Now, I am aware that only to the few is given understanding of the lure of sitting in a boat and therefrom casting a fly or hook upon the waters. Only to the few is given that strange joy when the line tautens under the fingers and the reel sings out; only to the few that peculiar mixture of joy and anxiety when, hanging over the edge of the boat at the risk of upsetting, landing-net in one hand and line in the other, previous victims flapping about one's feet and a sensation of dampness owing to water splashed on the boat-seat, one draws to the surface and captures with the net that mysterious and lurking thing we call a fish.

So I shall pass lightly over the adventures of the next day. I shall not enlarge on the speed with which we caught the club limit, or dilate on that debate as to whether they would count our catch or not. Enough to say that, in the end, discretion triumphed over cupidity, discretion, and, too, gratitude for the hospitality the club showed us.

At the end of a glorious morning, I sat back

and spoke to that member of the family who was rowing me about.

"Well, I'll say there are fish in this lake," I observed.

"You tell 'em," he said contentedly.

Having caught the limit that afternoon, we proceeded out of the club preserves to a small and higher lake, not far from the snow. Mounted on a large and unstable horse of the Percheron variety, while the men walked, we found the lake, and, at the edge, a boat. Inside the boat was water to the rim, and on that water floated a tin pail.

It is a peculiarity of mountain lakes that they are extremely deep, and I viewed the boat with misgiving, later justified by the facts. For the seams of that boat had opened, and the most active bailing only kept the water down to a foot or so in depth. Such fish as we caught swam round in it contentedly, along with the tails of my riding-coat, the fly-books, the camera, and the head-net which a club member had loaned me against mosquitoes.

That night, by a great wood fire, and sated with the supper-trout, we were prepared to boast a bit. But the club members brought out pieces of wood, on which were outlined in pencil certain mammoth fish, and our boasting died in our throats. We were pikers.

Riding, eating, and sleeping are, of course, the main features of a dude-ranch summer. But, of course, there are other things. Once a week to our ranch came the band from a near-by town, and in the big hall, decorated with wild-animal heads and hung with Indian rugs, there was a dance. Came to these dances a variety of people —the ranch-hands in their high-heeled boots, the pretty waitresses from the dining-room, Eastern society girls, bankers and cow-punchers, college boys and Eastern school-teachers. And danced and danced until the band, in a state of exhaustion, was carried home, and the electric-power plant in the basement under the dining-hall began to hiccup with fatigue.

Then, one day, the notice-board outside the dining-room announced a costume ball.

To understand fully the significance of this announcement, I need only say that the nearest costumers were in Omaha and Denver, and that Sheridan was twenty miles away—Sheridan, however, in this case, meaning a town and not the gentleman of the poem. Or was it Sherman? But never mind.

It was when I had decided that I had come away for a rest, and that nothing should induce me to get out the sewing-box—or the hammer, for ranch fancy dress sometimes has to be nailed together—that a member of my family came in,

bursting with enthusiasm—a senior member, one who should have known better. He was going as a lady circus rider.

"On a horse, you know," he said, evading my eye. "A white horse."

"In what?" I asked coldly.

"Oh, you know," he explained, with an airy gesture. "Short skirts and a wig. It ought to be bully."

I eyed him sternly.

"Certainly," I said. "Go ahead. Go as far as you like. Only, I call to your attention the fact that there are no short fluffy skirts in this family, nor any wigs."

He muttered something about getting a lot of petticoats, but I made no comment and went on with what I was doing, which happened at the moment to be scraping my boots clear of mud with my nail-scissors. He knew, and I knew, that there was not a petticoat in the family.

It was about that time that the young man in the cottage next door appeared, painfully rolling a barrel, and began to do certain mysterious things to it. I saw him later on, through his window, standing before his shaving-mirror, experimenting with vine leaves in his hair, like the man in "Hedda Gabler." And I then divined —later proved to be correct—that he meant to go as Bacchus, clad in leaves and a liquor-keg.

I remained obdurate. Parties on horseback were riding off to Sheridan and returning with mysterious bundles tied to the cantles of their saddles. The afternoon-bridge tables were deserted, and in shady interiors women sat alone, surrounded by crêpe-paper, sateen, and cheesecloth. The Indian decorations of the dance-hall were on the walls one moment and gone the next. Stealthy visitors came and took away my plain night-dresses for Crusader's tunics, and asked for Japanese fans and swords and gilt cord and wide blue ribbon, all of the things one might be expected to have on a ranch.

It was, I believe, on Saturday morning that one of the junior members of the family came in and observed that he thought of going as a caveman.

"'Caveman!'" said I. "How do you dress that?"

"You don't," he said. "That is, not much. Look here: You know those bearskins you bought for an automobile-rug?"

I did, I said warily.

"Well, what's the matter with cutting them up and making me some sort of costume out of them?"

"Just what do *you* intend to do about this costume?" I inquired, with interest.

"Well," he reflected, "I'll make my own club."

That afternoon, I capitulated. There would issue from our cottage for the grand march one caveman and one lady bareback rider. The caveman should have my precious furs, but the circus rider——

"I suppose I can make you something or other out of mosquito-netting," I said finally, "but what in the world will you do for a wig?"

I knew perfectly well what he would do for a wig. I knew that he would do nothing but hope. And that day I set to work to make a wig.

Now, there are two extremely useful things which have never been properly appreciated in the making of costumes. One is rope, and the other is mosquito-netting. Out of rope one makes hair of the palest peroxide shade, and out of the netting one makes fairies, ballet-dancers, Cleopatras, brides, and—circus riders.

To make the wig, one proceeds as follows: Take a light flax rope and untwist it. Do this sufficiently often, combing and brushing as you work, and you will find yourself in possession of various tresses of a most abandoned yellow color. But a wig has to be made over something, especially a rope wig. Having accumulated about a peck of flaxen hair, and having failed to borrow a foundation, I was reduced to cutting the crown out of one of my two summer hats. On it, laboriously and painstakingly, I sewed the frayed

rope, and when I had finished it and it had been put on, it changed an otherwise pleasant face into probably the most dissipated one I ever have seen.

There now remained the rest of the costume. Layer on layer of mosquito-netting formed the short fluffy skirt, which was worn over a foundation celebrated in our magazines by its three initials. Shoulder-straps of pink sateen with butterfly-bows, little garlands of artificial roses on the petticoats, a touch of rouge, a pair of white-silk stockings stretched beyond any further usefulness, the yellow wig, and a white horse without any saddle completed a costume which, for exciting comment, outdid the best creations of his tailor.

The day before the party, the embryo caveman of the family blew in with a pair of cow-horns, which, he observed quite casually, were to go on his head. Now, the human head is not fashioned for the wearing of cow-horns. On a cow's head they nestle neatly and permanently, but on the human head they show a tendency to droop despondingly over the ears. The net result of many experiments was a complicated network of wiring, laced and interlaced.

"But how am I to cover the wire?" I said desperately.

"Oh, the wig goes over that."

A haunted look passed over my face.

"Another wig!" I said, in a feeble voice.

However, it developed that Sheridan had resources of which I had wot nothing. The five-and-ten-cent store carried false hair, and out of six switches at fifteen cents each, an arrangement was contrived which hid the engineering project and gave to a youthful, normal, and ordinarily cheerful face a depth of cunning and brutality that was entirely unsuspected.

There was, as the junior member observed, nothing left to do about his costume but to cut up the bearskins. This I did, and they are now being expensively pieced together by a furrier. But the result was extremely good. I can only say that if a caveman looked as the junior member of the family did the night of the party, I no longer marvel that he had to drag his woman away by the hair of the head.

At five minutes before eight the night of the party, I finished rouging and eyebrow-penciling the ballet dancer, put on his abandoned wig, lamp-blacked the caveman's ferocious jaw, turned out complete as a Greek girl that other member of the family who spent his days on a horse and his nights, I have a suspicion, shooting craps in the bunk-house, and went to the veranda for a breath of air.

From all the neighboring cottages strange

figures were issuing. Bacchus was getting into his barrel. Pierrots and Pierrettes, Mexicans, Indians, ballet-girls, and pirates were hurrying toward the hall. The sound of the band floated over the evening air.

Desperately I ran into the house, rolled my hair high in Japanese fashion over a pair of silk stockings for a pad, thrust two long white knitting-needles through it, put on my Chinese-silk pajamas and my bedroom-slippers, uptilted the corners of my eyebrows, and inspected myself. I needed something.

With complete and utter recklessness, I flew to the closet, took out my only remaining hat, tore the flowers from it, and pinned them over my ears.

Then I went to the party.

We were to leave before long, on that long camping-trip in the south, which was intended so to fill me with the lure of the desert that hereafter I would not be contented without a sand-box in the garden, and after which the mere touch of the sand as I teed my golf-ball was, presumably, to send through me a madness of longing for the dry waste places.

But we were to wait for Frontier day. Now, on "the ranch," Frontier day is almost as established as Christmas. But during the war it had

been given up. The ranch itself had lost for a time much of its young life. The shadow had hung over it, as over all the country. So the revival of the celebration became, this time, a sort of peace jubilee. The cloud had lifted, and again in the sunlight Big Bill would rope eight horses running abreast, and the country would be searched for bad horses, to be ridden at the peril of various young necks. There would be games and races, and all the interest of a round-up, and, as in other years, the county would come, afoot and in motors, and would undoubtedly find the "dudes" more amusing than the round-up. For round-ups were, in a way, their daily bread, but a crowd of Easterners trying to be more Western than the West was a sort of dessert.

Now, on these occasions, the ranch does its part. It provides cow-punchers and bronchobusters. It provides animals which have to be roped and tied to get the saddle on them, and young daredevils who sit the saddle while the animal beneath them stiffens its legs, arches its back like a cat, and then proceeds to leap, whirl, bolt, and generally comport itself like a novice's nightmare of a horseback ride.

The guests, in return, provide a procession, and, like the Irishman who put four legs on the chicken in the riddle to make it harder, a procession in costume! But this time with this differ-

ence—that most of them must be worn on horseback.

Behold, then, on a bright summer afternoon, first, a band of fifteen pieces. Next, four girl heralds in costume, with trumpets to their lips, and riding white horses. After that, the corral outfit, in chaps and spurs, hats and neckerchiefs. Then a band of pirates, dragging a treasure-chest. And so, group after group—girls as flowers, a bouquet of them; Balkan male peasants in boleros and full white skirts, the skirts of plaited crêpe-paper that blew in the wind; Russian dancers in Cossack hats and boots; a fair damsel of the Middle Ages and her troubadours, the fair damsel's girdle, over her long blue gown, of curtain-rings neatly sewed together. One hundred and twenty people in costume, with the most dignified member of my family as Bluebeard, with nine Oriental wives on foot behind his horse. And below, fetching up the rear, a rainbow!

I was the rainbow.

On seeing me emerge, ready to mount him, my horse took fright and ran away. At the last moment, a broken-spirited creature, who was half blind and therefore could not be dazzled, was brought to me, and him I rode. Hence the rear of the procession.

There must have been a hundred yards of sew-

ing in that costume. I labored over it for days, and always I put away from me the thought that eventually I must come to the head-dress, a rainbow proper. Seven colors constituted it, and to this moment, opening the box suddenly in which it is stored, one ducks back, dazzled by its brilliancy. Then, on the last day, I started on the head-dress.

It could not be done. The wire I had went as limp as the stems of wild flowers clutched in a baby's hand. Adjusted on it, the rainbow was no longer a bow, but a hat—a dissipated, over-the-ear hat at that.

The Head, looking up from the cabbage he was cutting into human features ready to paint—for Bluebeard without the head of a wife or two was nothing—saw my distress and went toward the door.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"To the blacksmith shop," he replied. "Just quit worrying. I'll make you a frame that is a frame."

In an hour he returned, carrying a frame that was a frame. The head-band was a circular fitting from a stovepipe. The rainbow-arch was of barbed wire with the barbs nipped off. The whole had been welded on the blacksmith's anvil. This is, I think I may truly say, the only time a

hat of mine has been made by a blacksmith. I took that frame and on it sewed my rainbow.

The sun shone. The band played. Into the field, entirely surrounded by onlookers, rode this strange and exotic procession; the pirates, mostly bankers and brokers, doctors and lawyers in private life, flourishing their tin swords or carrying knives in their teeth; the prominent journalist who was a scarecrow; the débutantes who were flowers, or Hawaiian girls, or "Follies of 1922," or what-not; the polo-players and jockeys; the bull-fighters; the burial procession of John Barleycorn; the Italian organ-grinder, with the pretty Italian girl and a kitten dressed in brown suède for a monkey. They passed before the judge's stand, were reviewed, and went on, the strangest and most picturesque sight the old mountains towering above had seen since the days when Sitting Bull and his painted cohorts had passed beneath them in war-array.

In the winter, the ranch lies quiet at the foot of its great hills. In September comes the first snow, and soon the mountain-tops are solid white. Still and isolated, only the smoke of its chimneys tells that it still lives.

In sheltered valleys, the stock is wintering, close-huddled on occasion against cold and storm. Elk and mountain-lions, bears and coyotes, deer, and, occasionally, mountain-sheep, come down

from the high places and leave their trail for those who pass to see. Inside the main ranch-house, great fires burn, and mail comes but seldom, and books must take the place of outside intercourse and the telephone, of roads.

In April come the thaws, and then it is that the ranch wakens from its long sleep. The snow melts, and in its melting reveals the tragedies of the long cold; horses and cattle have died, and their pathetic figures lie where they fell, stiff, mute witnesses of what silent drama of the uplands we cannot know.

But as it reveals death, the vanishing of the snow shows life also—the first flowers, the green of the young alfalfa tops, the awkward foals and the great-eyed calves in the meadows, baby trout in the stream, and young birds experimenting with their wings.

The ranch has wakened. It has work to do, that all may be ready for its strange June blooming. And some time in that month there will emerge from the Eastern limited the buds for its summer flowers. Tired and drooping buds, often.

The station-master will watch them with interest.

"Who're they?" a bystander will ask.

The station-master will look at the mountainous trunks and sigh.

"Oh, dudes for the ranch," he will say.

THREE: Desert Caravaners

THREE

DESERT CARAVANERS

THE earth is worn and battle-scarred. It has come through its struggles with fire and upheaval, with water and ice, and now, in its quiet middle age, it is by its scars that it remembers.

The mountains are the scars of its ancient burning; the desert, of both flood and fire.

And out of the old, violent days have come two sorts of men—those that pursue and those that fly for shelter. Those faded scars of the world, the deserts, are peopled by the peace-seekers.

Inhospitable sanctuary, the great American desert has from time beyond record been the refuge of the pursued. Because it had nothing, it appeared safe from greed; because it threatened death, it gave life; because survival was a struggle, only the strong survived and persisted; because survival was a matter of intelligence, the dwellers in these waste places developed a civilization peculiar to themselves, adapted to their

needs, and far in advance of their pursuers of the fertile lands about them.

And thus we have the cliff-dwellers of the past and the pueblo-dwellers of to-day.

"Not Arizona and New Mexico in the summer!" people said to us.

"It's the only time we can go," we would reply, in apologetic tones. "Anyhow, there's a party going, and all the plans are made."

"And how far did you say?"

"Seven hundred miles. Camping at night, you know."

A certain pitying glance, not unmixed with admiration, always followed this statement. And about this time, too, the head of the family came across and read aloud an article on Death Valley. There were temperatures which sounded like the instructions for baking a cake. No birds were there; no life whatever. Of course we were not going to Death Valley, but the article considerably undermined our morale.

I sat down and wrote to Howard, whose enthusiasm for unknown places was behind the trip, explaining that I felt that I had, under normal conditions, a long and useful career before me, and why cut it short? Howard's reply was to the point:

"Bring blankets, sweaters, and something

warm to sleep in, and come," he wrote. But he signed it, "Yours to a frazzle," which I considered at least equivocal.

The temperature on the train in Wyoming was a hundred and three degrees, and we were headed south. But the heat grew less and less. Denver was cool; Albuquerque was chilly; Flagstaff was cold. Had we gone on to the border, I should probably have had to telegraph for my fur coat.

And now, having touched on the temperature, we might as well have all the weather at the start, like Mark Twain's story where he did that very thing.

The elevation for the entire trip was from six to seven thousand feet. The nights were always cool and sometimes cold. The days were, if sunny, very hot from eleven o'clock to three, but the air was dry and the temperature not troublesome. Evaporation was immediate, and the result was a tendency to seek the canteen often, and while sipping at its lukewarm, alkali-flavored contents, to dream of frappéd orange juice, soda-water, and even of those strange malt beverages which were once poured frothing out of a bottle or out of the wood, and whose very appearance was cooling.

But all the desert lacks is water. It has everything else. It has beauty and vegetation; it has people and animal life; it has adventure and inter-

est and a magical charm; it has mountains and valleys and color, and such sunsets as never were on land or sea; and this desert of ours has ruins more thrilling than Pompeii and of greater interest, and customs as ancient and more strange than Babylon.

Now, the reason for the excursion was this: Every year came to this region travelers and scientists from Europe, and got themselves outfits, and disappeared into the desert; equipped with note-books and cameras, water-bags and sleeping-bags, food and guides and bacon and potatoes, they went in, saw, marveled, and made copious notes. Then they came out, sat for a long time in the first bath-tub they could find, took the train, and so returned to Europe, there to publish what they had seen.

But a desert is not without honor save in its own country. To our desert there came, each year, a handful of Americans, who perhaps penetrated as far as the snake-dance, and then made for the railroad again, like people who have gone to a play and must then hurry home. And, at that, their numbers were few. Counting the local people, post-traders, and Indian school-officials, there were not three hundred people at the snake-dance this year, and I doubt if forty came from the East.

Of that forty, only our own party went on.

Yet within a day's journey was Walpi, and beyond that only two days were the cliff-dwellings at Chin Lee.

"For to admire and for to see," we went into the desert. We saw, admired, marveled, and adventured for seven hundred miles, leaving our machines for horses when necessary, and the horses for our feet as soon as possible. For there are horses and horses. When we left that desert Indian country, it was stripped of pottery and of rugs, and we brought out collectively about a ton of silver and turquoise jewelry, of which more anon.

On an August morning there gathered in front of the hotel at Flagstaff a heterogeneous group of people, some twenty-odd in number. It was strongly centralized about a tall, sun-burned, and worried-looking gentleman, hereafter to be known as "Howard," that being his name, and it showed a tendency to consult lists, which ran about as follows: thermos bottles, soap and towels, suitcases, oranges, electric flashlights, cameras, dark sun-goggles, overcoats, and sweaters.

At the curb, there waited in line eight automobiles, and somewhere ahead there lurched and swayed, on the road to the desert and the Little Colorado River, three huge trucks. The trucks

were our base of supply. One carried our stove and our food, and, most important of all, our cook. And the others carried our bedding and our tents—the sixteen little tepee tents in which we were to sleep, by ones and twos, the big dining-tent, and the cook-tent. The third carried gasoline and incidentals. When in full action, we looked like a circus procession.

On the front of each car somewhere there were fastened a pick, a shovel, and a large water-bottle.

Somehow, the preparations looked extremely businesslike and rather ominous. Also, it appeared that there was a divergence of opinion among the people of Flagstaff as to our chances for completing our itinerary. It seemed that, at certain places, there would probably be neither trail nor road, and that a traveler adrift in a boat at sea is in no worse case than the desert motorist whose machine runs out of gas a couple of hundred miles from civilization.

The Head of the family made a decision and acted on it immediately. He went somewhere and bought a compass.

Some time later, on the road, he consulted the compass.

"Where's north, Bill?" he asked our driver, of whom, like the turquoise, more anon.

"There," said Bill, pointing.

"Funny," the Head reflected. "This needle seems to point at the front of the car."

Bill smiled.

"Pointing at the magneto," he said laconically.

The Head sat for a moment in rather depressed silence. Then he brightened.

"Well, anyhow," he observed, "we'll always know where the magneto is."

In an incredibly short time we had left Flagstaff behind us. The trees which wood that beautifully located mountain town grew more and more sparse. The San Francisco Mountains, always snow-capped, still dominated us, but the country was empty and unsettled. The road was still a road, however, leading now through valleys, where we looked in vain for streams.

We were the lead car, and our eyes were fixed ahead for the trucks. They meant food and houses and beds to us. If they went on, we went on; if they overturned, so did our plans. And they were traveling fast. At Tolchaco, a small trading-post on the bank of the Little Colorado, they were reported an hour ahead, and "going to beat the band."

But for our immediate needs we did not require them. Fastened to the running-board of a rear car was luncheon, coffee, and coffee-pots, materials for sandwiches, a small sheet-iron stove. And, at last, having risen early, we halted on a

level place and prepared for lunch. We set up the sheet-iron stove. We got out the coffee-pot and the cups, the paper napkins and the plates. We gathered wood, and then——

"Where's the food?" some one inquired.

Eight cars were frantically searched. Twenty-odd hearts sank. And remained sunk. For the food-box was on one of the trucks, and the trucks were going to beat the band.

Now an Indian reservation of such size as the Navajo consists of a vast quantity of empty or almost empty territory surrounding Indian schools. The Indian school is to the reservation what the stations are to a railroad, or an oasis is to the desert, or a good nose is to a plain face. Fifty or a hundred miles apart, they are little centers of civilization in the wilderness; they have wells and running water, neatness and order, the American tongue and American ingenuity. And if I do not believe that the immediate result of education for the Indian spells content for him under present conditions, I do know that out of the present transition stage will come, for the children of the present new generation, their chance to compete with the whites and survive.

But these are post-facto thoughts. There was an Indian school at Leupp, somewhere ahead. Not that the term "at" Leupp means anything, the school being Leupp. And the school just then

meant two things to us, and two only: It meant the trucks and food, and it meant crossing the Little Colorado River.

Now, my idea of crossing a river has generally been a bridge. I have done it on a horse and in a boat. But in a machine I prefer bridges. Indeed, my liking for bridges when I am in a car amounts to an obsession. It seemed, however, that there was no bridge over the Little Colorado at Leupp.

The trucks were at Leupp. So was the river. So were we. And all of us gave every indication of remaining at Leupp.

Save for a few sordid souls who insisted on talking about food, our eyes and our attentions were centered on that reddish-brown, ugly, insignificant, and tremendous barrier, the river. Only the superintendent of the Indian school was optimistic, and he had buildings to support him, and food, and he wasn't going any place.

Over a breadth of bed of some six hundred feet of fissured mud and sand, the river sent small trickles of water which wandered here and there, as if seeking the mother stream. But if they did not know where the mother stream was, we did. It was hiding under the far bank, which was twenty feet high and extremely steep. Not that the mother stream was much, really. It was some thirty feet across and waist-deep in the center,

but, with the usual instinct of rivers, she had dug her channel abruptly. That is, one stepped off from the shallow into trouble at once. I know. I did it.

So, on Jordan's stormy bank we stood, and cast a wistful eye, and two Indians rode up on horseback and seemed extremely pleased at our predicament, and a native policeman, in olive drab with turquoise earrings, bracelet, and rings, and wearing a Colt forty-five, came and sat on the bank and yawned.

But the school superintendent was both kindly and resourceful. He sent to the school for a team, Indians, and ropes, while our drivers took off their shoes and socks and rolled up their trousers. Sometime I shall write an article about those drivers of ours, their ability and cooperation, their courage and courtesy. But now we must get across the river.

The Ford had caught up with us, and was, as is the custom with Fords, selected for the first victim. Escorted by running men, it shot out on the mud, stuck, was dug out, stuck again, again was rescued, and now made a flying leap at the stream. Suddenly we gave a loud wail. The Ford went forward smartly, dipped, fell forward, buried its nose in the hole in the river bottom, and there remained, slowly drowning. There is nothing sadder than a drowning Ford.

The Indians laughed.

The trip was, we felt, over before it had begun. There were our eight big cars. There were our three mountainous trucks. True, there was a bridge at Winslow, twenty miles away, but we were mistakenly informed that it had washed out. And the Little Colorado is one of those insignificant streams that burrows, like a prairie-dog, so that we crossed either at Leupp or Winslow or not at all.

Came at last two Indian boys and a team of horses and crossed, and with them went that portion of the masculine half of the party which didn't mind getting wet. In a short time, the Ford was seen to jerk and quiver. We stood breathless and waited. It moved; it advanced. Greeted with shouts, it went all the way in and then, slowly, all the way out. And more, it still lived. The sound of its beating pulse came across the river and revived us.

We had now, on the other side, two horses, two Indians, eight white men, and a Ford. Collectively, they represented considerable power. We took a large car and sent it on. It repeated the Ford's performance save that it died harder and sank deeper. It required two hours' pulling by horse and Ford, and pushing by almost the entire male personnel, before it emerged, coated with

mud, to join the Indians, the horses, the policeman, and the panting Ford.

And we had had no luncheon. True, the cook was there and the food was there, but nothing seemed to happen. Later, we were to learn about Jimmy—that he was as patient as Job, as amiable as a human being can be and live. And that he could cook. But he was not trained to cook for a circus. He was accustomed to look for his pots and pans on a hook, and not among automobile tires and gasoline torches. Nor was he, either, accustomed to cooking for people who regarded each meal as possibly their last, owing to the uncertainties of vehicular traffic, and who therefore stocked up as do camels in the desert. We were almost forty people, and only Jimmy stood between us and hunger.

But Jimmy was slow and, that first day, not quite sure of himself. At four o'clock, however, the coffee was ready and sandwiches cut and spread, and across the stream, shoes and hose in one hand and food in the other, came the Banker to join that courageous group which had already waded through, and which now sat, sans shoes or stockings or towels, drying itself in the sun.

We camped that night on the other side, in a sandy desert plain, for the men were exhausted. In a row we set up our little tents, unrolled our bedding, and looked for the cold-cream to wash

with. For opinion was unanimous. We would not wash in the water from that muddy stream. Time was to come, however, when we remembered the Little Colorado as all that was fresh and limpid, cooling and grateful.

And, as if to make up for the day, the sun went down in a bank of crimson clouds that night, turning the desert to pale rose and the shadows to softest mauve. I would not sleep in a tent. I lay outside in my sleeping-bag and stared at the stars.

We were, first of all, to see the snake-dance.

There is a misconception to be corrected about the snake-dance. It is not a spectacle given for the benefit of onlookers. It is not staged for effect. Indeed, the presence of onlookers is purely by concession on the part of the Indians, and this last year, held, as it was, at Hotevila, only the innate courtesy of the Indians permitted visitors at all. For the Indians at Hotevila are a revolt group from Oraibi, people who, for a principle, like the Pilgrims, sought liberty in exile.

Opposed to the Indian schools, and to the government principle of taking the children away from their homes to the schools, the Hotevila Indians established themselves, some years ago, in an isolated spot on the high mesa above the desert. And since the Indians would not go to

the government, the government went to the Indians. It followed them and built a school near by.

The snake-dance is not a spectacle but a solemn religious ceremony. It is a complicated and elaborate prayer for rain, and this prayer is carried by the snakes, on their later distribution, to the gods who dwell under the ground.

But we had not reached Hotevila. On our first day we had made but fifty-six miles, and so the second it was necessary that we make a hundred. That would be easy, provided we encountered no mud.

Mud in the desert? Certainly. For there is a small rainfall in our desert, and it comes in the summer.

The Painted Desert has been often described. Peculiar mixture of wildness and beauty, of vivid colorings that give a false impression of life, of cliff-faces that gleam like jewels, and of green things dry to the touch, it has loveliness with desolation and beauty that is the beauty of death.

Horned toads, prickly to the hand, and small, swift lizards dart under its stones, and here and there, but miles apart, are mixed flocks of goats and sheep, tended by an Indian from a near-by hogan so protected by its coloring that it is almost invisible.

By noon we had crossed the Painted Desert,

had topped a low range, and were well on our way. The trucks, this time, were behind us, and we now learned that habit which was to become so familiar later on—of watching behind for the trucks, and wondering what had happened to them. This time, however, Howard had the lunch with him. Nothing would have separated him from the lunch. From time to time, the rest of us got out and looked at the view and stretched our weary muscles. But not Howard. He sat in his car, holding to the luncheon-hamper with a look of grim resolution on his face.

It was, you see, Howard's party.

Now and again, Bill looked far ahead, and at such times he put his foot on the gas and forgot we were not on a macadam road.

"Rain there," he said once. "Better beat it if we can."

We did not beat it. It had been a small cloud, and it had attended to business over an area about a quarter of a mile in extent. But that quarter of a mile was the Hellespont, so far as we were concerned. On either side rose the mesa, a hundred or two hundred feet high, and naturally difficult for automobiles. Through the center went our trail, and that trail was now two feet deep with a mass the consistency and stickiness of bread-dough and of the cohesive powers of chewing-gum.

Some Indians came along behind us. They were on their way to the snake-dance, driving little Conestoga wagons with four to six ponies each. They had their hair in clubs on their necks, and all the family silverware on, and their families in the wagons. And they cracked long whips and whistled to their ponies, and greatly resembled not Indians but fairies at that moment. The babies in their mothers' arms stared at us solemnly as they passed. The little ponies strained and fought the mud, and the wagons went on. Behind them they left a deep, wide rut, which would quickly dry and let us through.

We reached the trading-post at the foot of the cliff on which lies Oraibi at three o'clock, and immediately the post, with its trading Indians inside and its lounging ones outside, was besieged with a thirsty crowd demanding pop, sarsaparilla, anything wet. It came; it was wet, but it was tepid.

"Haven't you anything cold?" we asked despairingly.

The boy behind the counter eyed us.

"Sorry," he said laconically. "Iceman didn't come this morning."

On top of a barrel outside the post, soon Howard and a corps of volunteers were making the luncheon sandwiches; a whole boiled ham was sliced; bread, butter, and peach butter were

A THOUSAND FEET ABOVE THE PLAIN

The trail down to the desert spring is hollowed in the rock by weary naked feet.

HOTEVILA

The Spaniards crossed from Mexico in search of the seven mesa towns, reputed to be rich in gold and silver. Hotevila is one, 1200 feet above the plain, the only access by a steep and winding trail.

HOPI SNAKE DANCE

The little priest on the right was bitten several times by a rattlesnake.

THE PRAYER FOR RAIN

The lack of exact focus is because it is forbidden to photograph the dance.

ready, and inside the building an Indian woman was boiling our coffee. Huge bags of wool hung near by, for the desert Indian trades the product of his sheep for money or for goods at the post. Hopi Indians surrounded us, hung, like their Navajo brothers, with old turquoise jewelry, and fearless poultry strutted about our feet. Tame hawks were chained on the flat tops of the Indian houses, for we had reached at last the house-dwelling Indians.

The Navajo hogan looks like a roughly constructed bird's nest turned upside down, but the Hopi lives in a house built of adobe and timber. Direct descendant of the cliff-dwellers, even in those prehistoric days they were house-builders. The great caves we had come to see, hollowed by nature in high cliff-faces, were only the sites in which they built their dwellings of masonry, earth, and wood.

Truly, the Hopis are of those who sought in the desert sanctuary from their enemies. A peaceful and agricultural people, surrounded on all sides by fierce nomadic tribes, what unwritten histories lie behind this dying people, reduced now to seven tiny villages, yet fiercely retaining their tribal integrity! Each village is built on the top of a steep and almost inaccessible cliff. To reach their tiny desert fields, even to get to their water-springs, they must descend a thousand feet

along a steep trail, where the rocks are hollowed by the passage of their bare feet. To go home at night, the weary shepherd or worker in the fields must again make that long and torturing climb.

And they cannot be lured away. Like eagles, they build their nests high, so that they can search the horizon for enemies. They trust no one, not even the government.

I sat on a wool-scale and ate my luncheon, and drank of the best water we were to find on the desert, while chickens waited at my feet for falling crumbs, and an ancient Indian gentleman planted himself before me and reiterated repeatedly, "George," at the same time pointing to himself.

"Mary," I finally replied, indicating my chest. "Mary."

"Mary," he said, with a broad smile.

This flirtation might have gone on indefinitely, but the time had come to go on. Life is like that. No sooner does a new interest come than it is time to go on. And there was a fresh anxiety also, for the trucks had not come. Read that phrase again, for it will recur often.

Bill approached me as I sat on the scale, slightly smeared with peach butter, and ended the George-and-Mary business abruptly.

"All ready?" he inquired.

"For what?"

"To go up on the mesa."

"You don't mean," I protested, "to climb that cliff in the car, do you?"

"There's a wagon-road. It's all right for cars."

I looked at Bill and I looked at the cliff. Both were tall, stern, and extremely determined as to face. I rose.

"We're the lead car, you know, Bill," I said. "If there's any trouble, we'll get into it. But if you say so——"

We climbed. At the foot of the cliff, we met a dejected-looking man with a car, being towed by two horses. He had straddled a rock and done considerable damage to those mysterious parts of a car that lie underneath, and a hundred and fifty miles of desert lay between him and a garage. It was clear that turquoises and Indian rugs and snake-dances were nothing in his life just then.

We went on. At nine hundred feet above the plain, we hung on the edge of the cliff, and the others said the view was wonderful. I had my eyes shut. But the truth about that road is that it is safe, sufficiently wide; and with a rough coping at the worst places. Those years when the dance is at Oraibi or Hotevila, dozens of cars negotiate it, and there is no record of tragedy. Save one, and that was our own little drama, and had to do, as may be supposed, with the trucks.

On top of the cliff was Oraibi. Imagine, then, a collection of adobe houses, sometimes superimposed, one on another. The color of houses and mesa blends, so that there is a curious lack of definition about the outlines of the buildings. The roofs are flat, and access to them is gained by ladders. No leaf of vegetation grows. Even the Indian children, running nude or largely so, give no touch of color, for their bodies are the color of the red-brown earth. But there is color in the blankets and jewelry of the men, in the shawls of the women—color which is vivid and romantic.

But, for a time, Oraibi did not interest us. Perched on rocks at the edge of the cliff, below us and far south stretched the desert, and there, somewhere, were the trucks. We searched it, inch by inch, for our monsters. The glasses passed from eye to eye. A half-hour went by. An hour. The more curious or the least anxious watched the Indian women cutting corn out of yucca or willow baskets on to sheepskin on the hard-pounded dirt floors, clean and freshly swept, for the snake-dance would bring visitors. A few even descended into the bath-kiva, and reappeared hurriedly, gasping for breath.

A bath-kiva is a hole, twenty-odd feet underground and reached by a ladder. When the impulse for cleanliness overpowers the Hopi, they

descend into the cave, and over the mouth is placed a large hot rock covered with straw. In this fireless cooker, the cleanliness-seekers remain, gently sweating, until done. Then——

"There they are!"

"Give me the glasses. Where?"

"Follow the edge of that arroyo to the right. They're as plain as day."

"Those are Indian wagons."

"Give me the glasses," another voice pipes up. "I see them. There are only two of them."

Frightful anxiety followed. There were only two. No. Wasn't there something moving over there, far behind? There was. We were saved again!

It was at this time that I bought the first turquoise necklace. Came a time later when no car was so poor as not to have six or eight of them, but this was the first. By it I achieved distinction for a whole day. It came about in this fashion:

An elderly Indian, not George, came up behind me and went through the gestures of a small drama, but without the props, to use a theatrical word. To be exact, he rehearsed himself lighting and smoking a cigarette, and left the rest to us. Now, to get tobacco legitimately, that Indian had to do certain things. He had to raise a sheep and sell the wool to the trader, or the meat. Or he

had to plow a field in the sand and pray for rain, and when the corn grew, he had to do the same thing. This struck us as too long to wait, so we gave him some cigarettes. Upon which I admired his necklace, and tentatively held up five fingers.

With the rapidity of lightning, he closed and opened his hand five times. In vain I opened mine three times, four times. And the situation was serious. Every moment came other members of the party, ready, for all I knew, to open their hands six times. I capitulated. Thirty-six large matrix-turquoise, hundreds of the ground-down tiny shells they call wampum, and probably innumerable germs became mine by this transaction.

But we were not yet at the snake-dance. Hotevila lay six miles away on the cliffs, and again we got into our cars, going through that painful process of finding room for feet and knees among the suit-cases with which the motor-traveler is familiar.

By evening, we were camped in the Indian school-grounds, where a large tank promised water, and where our camp took on for the first time its full size and impressiveness. It consisted of:

1: The cook- and dining-tents. In the first, Jimmy, innumerable boxes, barrels, and crates.

The stove was outside. In the second, two long tables, folding camp-chairs, and gasoline-torches. On the table-boards was spread oilcloth, and, at proper intervals, food.

2: The sleeping-tents. A street of eight tepees on either side, set up with great regard for geometrical angles, and a complete indifference as to the shape and configuration of the ground beneath. And our tents had this difficulty: the floors were sewed to the walls. What was left beneath remained beneath. Hence, the first night I slept over a coil of rope, and a junior member of the family, after three days, discovered, by the shape of a bruise on him, a lost hatchet. One of the chief outdoor sports of camping in a tepee is to take down one's tent, generally after nightfall, and, while a protesting relative holds the flash-light, endeavor with a spade to remove stones, small hillocks, cactus, and so on from the site of one's bed.

3: The lounging-tent. An open-at-the-sides shelter from the sun, generally occupied by Indians who wish to sell corn, blankets, eggs, whole carcasses of sheep, pottery, baskets, and turquoise jewelry set in silver. Also by shy little Indian children who needed handkerchiefs.

There began at once that orgy of barter which remained with us to the end, and which still

results in frequent trips to the express office. Dignified gentlemen who would not buy a red necktie at home began to go around wearing necklaces of silver, a half-dozen silver-and-turquoise rings, silver bracelets set with turquoise, and belts of silver plaques. We jingled as we walked. And the things were cheap. From two to five dollars at first bought exquisite bracelets, set with fine, big stones. Necklaces went at from five to fifteen and twenty dollars, rings from fifty cents up. The arrival of a dozen cars for the snake-dance, however, bulled the market. But the mania had us by that time. We continued to buy.

We had three days before the snake-dance, and we filled it in various ways. A considerable time was spent in drinking water, for the heat was intense. Indeed, so much precious water did we use that at last, for washing-purposes, we were reduced to one cupful per day, and the tank having run out, water had to be hauled twelve miles from a distant spring. To this, the capable superintendent of the school attended. Our canvas water-bags, hung in the shade, stayed cool by evaporation.

Then, barter losing its first charm, and drinking water being an occupation and not a relaxation, we took to horses. But the kindly, smiling Hopi are very poor. They have nothing but their small flocks of sheep and goats, and their tiny

fields of corn and melons, retrieved at the cost of cruel and relentless labor from the sands. Not long ago came experts from an agricultural college to these Indians, to teach them dry farming. The experts came, and stayed to learn, for the desert Indians are the original dry farmers of the world. They can raise corn where a white man could not raise a rattlesnake.

By long experience they know where, at the foot of the cliffs under the sand, are the hidden springs. With pointed sticks they dig holes in the sand sometimes twelve or fifteen inches deep, and into these holes they drop the seed. With the first green, they labor unceasingly, keeping back the encroaching sand and the desert weeds, fighting birds and creeping things, working the surface as does our dry farmer, that, by capillary attraction the moisture may rise and nourish the plants. It is a marvel of patient labor and indomitable courage.

So they live, but they do not flourish. And they have no grain to spare for horses. Their own patient backs carry their burdens. Their own weary feet wear hollows in the stones of the trail. Where there is a beast, it is generally a burro, that Ford among horse-flesh, willing and small of up-keep. When the word went out that we wanted horses, they came, but mostly without

saddles—little horses, not over-nourished, gentle and obliging like their owners.

Helvetia fell to me. A woman who had ridden her the day before had named her, with, she said, the accent on the first syllable. Helvetia was a slow walker, resolutely refused to trot, and could run like a dog. I was, therefore, either far behind the family or flying madly past them, losing my hat ever and anon, and bringing up at the cliff-edge with not an inch to spare.

However, mounted on Helvetia at her slowest, I was able to ransack the neighborhood for hitherto unsuspected pottery, jewelry, rugs, and baskets, all of which must some time be packed into the car.

During this time, preparations for the dance were going on in the village. Out on the desert, carrying leather bags, the priests had brought in the snakes, and over them, in the underground kivas, were going on those strange and mysterious ceremonies of which only the subdued chantings reached the upper air. At certain hours we saw solemn and fantastically dressed lines of priests ascending or descending into the kiva, intent on the business in hand.

Around them, the village went about its affairs. Dogs barked and chickens roamed at large, for the Hopi do not kill chickens. In front of the low pueblo-houses were hung meats to dry in the

sun, against the approaching celebration. On their knees inside, women knelt over the hollowed stone troughs, and with other stones rubbed the dried corn into meal, either for household use or, if they were brides, to pay for their husbands. For a Hopi girl must deliver to her husband's mother, within the first year after marriage, some fifteen hundred pounds of hand-ground meal! Naked children played, burros brayed, and women were smartening the fronts of their houses with fresh clay.

The Hopi women build and own the houses. Indeed, in some ways, the Hopi have a matriarchy. Divorce is achieved by the simple method of the woman putting the man's saddle and other belongings out of the house, by which he understands that he is no longer *persona grata,* and goes away. The men weave the dresses of the women and their sashes.

So the village life went on. Below, in the kiva, the snakes were being washed and purified. Above, in our camp, they were being looked for in their blankets by nervous women, and various members of the party were visiting the little plaza of the village, with an eye to picking out positions of strategic value. For it appeared that, at certain stages of the ceremony, the snakes were dropped to the ground, to be picked up later or too late, as the case might be.

So we waited, and drank and rode and bartered and rode again, and at last the head of the family made a discovery. Repeated ridings had worn through an essential portion of his outfit, and it was necessary to repair it. For this he borrowed some adhesive plaster and retired to his tent, where, as it was very hot, he left the tent flap open. Some time later, I approached his place of retirement. The Head was sitting on the ground, engrossed in his patching, lightly clad, and totally unconscious of the absorbed interest of three Indian women and a baby just outside.

Came the day before the dance, and the early-morning race. Most of us had slept in our clothing, for at the first sun-rays, about half-past four, the race began. We roused to a wild shrieking of automobile-horns, which was our rising-bell, and in five minutes were on our way, helter-skelter, to the rim of the mesa at the town. Here were already gathered, in brilliant blankets against the chill, the Indians. They stood on the rocks in the early rose of the dawn, alone or in silent groups of twos or threes, grave, watchful, and wonderful to the eye. No words, no painting, can ever tell the exquisite pathos of that picture—the rose-and-gold dawn, the purple desert far below, and on the ancient rocks these immobile brilliant figures, dying survival of a

lost civilization, direct descendants, perhaps, of Montezuma.

This race is a race of the young men. In the cool, sweet air of the dawn, they leave a spring far out in the desert and run toward the mesa-top, where, at the head of the trail, priests are waiting to receive them. Running is a part of the Hopi boys' training, and they run like deer. At last we could see them, tiny moving dots in the far distance. Now they were close beneath, and the faint jingling bells rose to our gray heights. Almost nude, their long hair flying, in great easy leaps they climbed the trails to where the priests stood waiting. The winner was sprinkled with sacred meal and water, and then ran on to the Antelope kiva, there to receive from the chief priest sacred meal and an amulet. The others went on, to deposit prayer-offerings. A few moments later, we saw the winner again. Carrying the meal and the amulet, he ran down the trail and out over the desert, there, we were told, to bury his prize in his corn field, for success to his crops.

But the ceremony was not entirely over. Up the trail there came, after the racers, perhaps a dozen boys and men, carrying corn-stalks. Immediately, the solemnity of the occasion was lost in shrieks of mirth as the corn-stalk bearers laid about them vigorously, and girls and women,

laughing and shrieking, tried to capture their green weapons.

The Banker had not risen for the race. The Banker was an honest man. He said frankly that he had come away for a rest, and that he meant to have it. He wished the Grand Cañon could be brought to him, and he spent his amiable, restful days in camp on a canvas chair in the shelter-tent, stared at by Indian women and babies, on whom he distributed largess so they would go away, with the result that he was surrounded until his visibility was almost at the vanishing-point.

But he went to the snake-dance. I came across him after it was over, with a canvas water-bag at his elbow and fanning himself with a week-old newspaper.

"How'd you like it?" I inquired.

It seems that the day had not been wholly fortunate for him. On the way to the plaza, he had happened on a small domestic scene which had slightly unnerved him, although it was merely the slaughter of a prairie-dog intended for supper. The Banker liked prairie-dogs when they sit up cunningly beside their little mounds and waggle their noses. But he did not like to think of them as food. In fact, he had felt then that the afternoon was spoiled for him.

However, he kept on, and at last he reached the plaza.

Now, the Banker's idea of a place for snakes is in a large, strong glass case in a zoological garden. He does not like any snake. But mostly he hates rattlesnakes.

So, seeing that some other people were going up ladders and sitting on the flat house-roofs, he decided to do so also. With some effort, for the Banker is a large man, he reached a roof, and there sat down on a low ledge and mopped his face.

He was very hot. He was hotter and hotter. He had begun to wonder if he could stick it out when a man next to him inquired:

"Not on fire, are you? You're smoking."

Upon which, the Banker suddenly rose, to be immediately enveloped in a black cloud. He had been sitting on an active chimney!

But, even to those of us who were not on chimneys, it was very hot that afternoon. On the edge of a roof, where no snake could climb, I sat and watched the crowd—archeologists and students of Indian life, miners and cow-punchers, traders and teachers from the reservation schools, ranchers and business men from Arizona and New Mexico, all of whom had come over the desert at least a hundred and fifty miles, from

Winslow, Flagstaff, or the Grand Cañon, for this half-hour or less of primitive religious drama.

The crowd suddenly hushed. The priests were coming. Before we could see them, we heard the ceremonial rattles. Nervous women on the ground drew back into the crowd, holding their skirts tight about them, and the complacent lucky ones on the roofs watched and grinned.

Of the snake-dance itself much has been written—the stamping of the weirdly dressed and painted priests on a plank covering a hole in the ground which represents the entrance to the underworld, and which announces to the gods of the underworld that the supplication is about to be made; the low, monotonous chanting before the kisi, a sort of cottonwood bower where the snakes lie in ollas of baked clay; the bringing-out from the kisi of the snakes, and that blood-curdling procession of the snake-priests round the plaza, the snakes held between their teeth.

Our interest was centered on the three small boys who, in paint and feathers, were new hereditary priests, and who, like the others, held the poisonous reptiles. Poor little novitiates, so much concerned about keeping step and observing the proper decorum, and so indifferent, apparently, to the death that writhed and curled in their small arms.

They never die, it is said. Yet would we know,

perhaps, if they did die? I sometimes wonder. For one small child was bitten several times. He bore it for a time; then he spoke to the chief beside him, and his snake was taken. Either frightened or ill, he lost his step in the dance and could not regain it. But he stayed to the end, small martyr to his faith, and to the need of rain that his people might live on.

They do not die. The snakes are not tampered with beforehand. The truth seems to be that the Hopi have an antidote, administered not before but after the fact.

"In three days," said the Indian policeman calmly, "the boy all right again."

But there is humor at the snake-dance. Plenty of it. It comes between the moment when the "carrier" priest drops the snake on the ground, and before the "gatherer" priest has picked it up. In that moment, the snake has but one idea, and that is flight. With incredible rapidity, it launches itself toward the human ring and who is there in that ring to say it nay? So far as our audience was concerned, it could go as far as it wanted. And—I may be mistaken—but was there not a slight twitch about the mouths of those gatherer priests when they allowed the snakes to reach the very feet of that stampeding crowd before they swooped down and picked them up? A faint twinkle about the eyes?

At last, all the snakes are out of the kisi, and now lie in a twisting, hideous heap on the ground. The mass is sprinkled with sacred meal; the chief priest prays, and then——

Happening to look away, I saw Bill leaving the plaza. On hearing running-steps behind him, Bill stopped, and turned, to stand petrified. And well he might, for almost on him was a priest, his arms full of snakes, and running as only a Hopi can run. Bill stood, however, but an instant. The narrow way was choked with cars. So Bill ran, too, and he took two leaps to the priest's one, and a few extra. For hours after, Bill was a chastened man.

The reason for Bill's *contretemps* was simple, for, the ceremony over, the snake-priests catch up armfuls of snakes and run like deer to the plain below the mesa. There they reverently deposit the snakes, pray over them, and leave them there, to carry the supplication for rain to the gods of the underworld.

Of the ceremony of purification that follows the dance, I cannot speak with authority. I carried away with me a sense of the essential dignity of religious ritual however primitive, of custom sanctified by antiquity, of faith and its undying quality. I wished no anticlimax. But, for the curious, I will say this: Immediately after the ceremony, the priests swallow a strong emetic,

and going to the edge of the cliff, get rid of it in the usual manner.

Impressive, barbaric, and in its primitive surroundings, the snake-dance takes the civilized onlooker and carries him back to those early days of the world when his savage forebears worshiped nature as their god. It is sometimes horrible, but never grotesque. And it is worth a long journey to see. But it had its humor, as I have said.

There was that tall and ancient Indian, wrapped in a blanket, who, from a house-top at the edge of the plaza, addressed the crowd with such dignity and restraint of gesture. At first we thought it was a prayer, then a sermon. But it turned out to be the town crier, announcing that a tourist had lost a camera and tripod, and offering a reward for its recovery.

And there were the people with cameras who were forbidden to use them, for the Hopi and indeed all pueblo Indians have a hatred of the camera. But the rule does not always work.

During the dance, a high wind had been blowing. When we returned to the camp, we found that there had been a sand-storm. The cook-tent had blown down. Sand was over everything and in everything; beside the ruins of the tent, a depressed Jimmy and his Indian helper were washing, in our scant supply of water, the sand from the dishes and out of the supper. There was sand

in my bedding, in my spare boots, in my hair-brush and tooth-brush, in my cold-cream and my soap.

Since that time, I have wondered about those idyls of the desert, those travels of lovers in camel caravans. Was the lady always beautiful and amiable, with sand down her neck and in her powder-box? Was her lover always above such trifles as the sugar-bowl contents looking like ground pepper? Did neither of them ever sit on a cactus plant, or feel the need of a daily bath?

Now, I have a very precious possession. It is called a portable bath, and the apparatus is simple. It consists of a canvas bag to be filled with water and hung high. Underneath is a shower-attachment. But it requires three things—extreme privacy, water, and a tree. I had none of the three. But word finally came to me that there was a chance for a bath. There was, some distance away in a hollow of the rocks, a tiny pool of rain-water. It had at least a promise of seclusion, and so, carrying towel and soap, to this hollow I wended my way secretly and furtively.

But the pool was a disappointment. It was about five feet across, three feet deep, and covered with a green scum, agitated here and there by some mysterious life beneath. Moreover, it was entirely fringed by things that jagged. I took a long, sad look at the scum, at the move-

ments of that scum, at the cactus and thorns, at the stinging insects that hung round in clouds, and then I went back to camp.

We were to go the next day, and rain was our greatest enemy. Yet we had, that very day, at least encouraged the Hopis in their prayer for rain.

"We might have a contra-dance," some one suggested.

Indeed, after the bridge games in the dining-tent were ended that night, we went out to find the sky overcast, and an anxious party crawled into its tepee tents that night and went to bed.

The method of getting into one's bed while standing on it is complicated. When there are two bed-rolls in a tent, entirely covering the floor, and two persons, three suitcases, a camera, a hanging lantern, an electric torch, a tin basin, two thermos bottles, four Indian baskets, two books of the region, a plaster bust of an Indian by an Indian, an antique pottery ladle, two leather motor-coats, and a collection of extra boots and clothing, the process of going to bed becomes one of excavation. Then, too, a sleeping-bag only opens at the top. It becomes necessary, therefore, to sit down on the head of one's bed, draw up one's feet, raise the body on both hands, get first one foot and then the other introduced, and then gradually to straighten out. That this

process leaves most of one's night-garments about the neck cannot be denied. Also, in these desert regions, there is some uncertainty about what may be lurking in the snug recesses into which the feet go with trepidation.

I found, on this particular occasion, that a large fat toad had preceded me to bed.

But now our days of ease were over. The next morning, down came the tents. My precious candle-lantern was folded, my soap-box wash-stand abandoned. I untied my mirror from a tent-rope, placed several pounds of jewelry in my blankets, anointed my nose, which felt like a prairie-fire, and was ready to join our innumerable caravan.

It had not rained, but when we reached the desert again we found out that a little rain goes a long way in northern Arizona. Tiny arroyos became bogs; before we had gone a mile, a car stuck and was dug out. And then began that series of pauses, of surveys of the road as it dipped into washes, of pick-and-shovel work to smooth the edges of these dips, which was to remain with us to the end.

By noon we reached the trading-post at the foot of the mesa on which lies Walpi. We were to wait there for the trucks, visit the town on the cliff, and then push on. But, while in the trading-post buying rugs, jewelry, Indian dolls and baskets, the Ford came up with news of dis-

aster. The big truck had broken an axle on the Oraibi cliff, and the other trucks were behind it!

It *was* disaster. Joe, who drove the Ford, had brought his news, turned, and departed. He was to go to Holbrook, a hundred and sixty-five miles, get a new truck, take it to Oraibi, get the load, and follow us. Then—and only then—would we have again food and shelter.

FOUR: The Spirit of the Sightseer

FOUR

THE SPIRIT OF THE SIGHTSEER

WE were, literally, marooned in the desert. True, the trading-post had water and also sardines, crackers, canned fruit, and such-like provision against starvation. But we were to live for an indefinite period on such food, and the prospect was discouraging. We had no dishes, no tents, and no bedding.

A sort of lethargy of despair settled down on us, but it had a reaction. We began to see the humor of the situation. We even began to think that it would be good for us. We had so long been pampered with beds and food and raiment. We had wanted a change, and we were having it.

In the meanwhile, we had time. We had nothing but time. And up the cliff-face to Walpi went a tiny, twisting, agonizing road. No car could negotiate it. Indeed, the only easy way to Walpi is by aeroplane, and so narrow is the mountain top on which it lies, some fifteen feet or so in one place, that a self-respecting aeroplane would overhang it in some places, once landed, on either side. Yet the more inaccessible Walpi appeared, the more determined I was to reach it.

At first we viewed that eagle's nest of a town from below. Then a handful started to climb to it, afoot. But I had long ago learned that observation and cunning are better than muscle for surmounting obstacles, and in a shed I had seen a covered two-seated wagon.

Could horses be secured for that wagon? They could. Could the horses pull the wagon up the trail? Well, the road had slipped in one place, but it might be done. Would some of the women care to ride? Would they!

We lunched on cheap sardines, canned cheese, crackers, and tinned fruit (observe this menu, for it will be repeated) and then mounted into our chariot. We were off. And the road had certainly slipped. On the edge of the abyss was still a portion of it, and to this portion we clung desperately, our vehicle scraping along the cliff-wall, and not an inch to spare.

Near the top we overtook one of the foot-climbers leaning against a rock. He hailed us politely, and took off his hat.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "but do you know where I can get a taxi-cab?"

Then, at last, we were on top, and miles on miles of desert and mesa lay below us; the trading-post was a midget; our cars were tiny, almost indistinguishable dots.

The snake-dance alternates between Oraibi and

Walpi, one year at one town, the next at the other. I should like to see it at Walpi, in that magnificent environment. For Walpi is superb. Older probably than the fortress-castles on the Rhine, impregnable and proudly dominating, there is nothing with which to compare it. It should be the Mecca of innumerable desert caravans, but to-day it stands alone, visited by a few artists, a half-dozen tourists each year.

It has, like all Indian towns of the Southwest, its beauties and its ugliness. Its streets are clean and its cliff-faces filthy. And in one of its flat-roofed adobe houses I found a young Indian girl reading a copy of a popular magazine!

I think there is tragedy there. The girl was young, pretty, and neat. She had been to school and spoke good English. About her was going on the primitive life of her people. Yet, from that early period when she had gone away to the government school, she had been taught the order and decorum of living. She had learned of that great world beyond the desert, where lay the modern enchantments, to a girl, of romantic love, of personal and sophisticated adornment, and of luxury.

But she had gone back; for what else is there for her? The tribal system is patriarchal. It holds the family close; it demands her loyalty and her return. And in time she marries and bears

children. It is these children, and not the present generation, which will profit by her school training, for she will see to it that they have what she has not had, a chance to adventure and to achieve.

A famous motion-picture star made a picture at Walpi. In some way, probably a method not unknown in politics, he secured the cooperation of the Indians, and the results were good. Then he went back to his studio, and there made a miniature Walpi, cliffs and all, which he proceeded to destroy. Thus, Walpi in the picture shakes, totters, and disappears. Then, the picture finished, the star decided, on his way East, to go back there and show the picture to the Indians.

The night came. The audience gathered. They watched the picture with stoical interest until—horror of horrors!—they saw Walpi, their own Walpi, destroyed. Madly they rushed to the windows of the schoolhouse and looked out, and there was Walpi, their own Walpi, safe and whole against the star-filled sky.

Truly these white men were magicians.

We had, as usual, returned to the car with loot, and now began that fascinating pursuit of the hideous Indian doll which has made at least one bedroom in my house a chamber of horrors, and which was, later, to bring a young woman we will call "Annabelle," that being her name, into contact with the law. For the pursuit of the

Indian doll is even worse than that of the blanket. Blankets are made for sale; dolls must be rounded up in their lairs, coaxed from walls, unearthed from hiding-holes, driven out at the point of a pocket-book, and forced to surrender.

We had bought three dolls at Walpi, and there being no inch of space further available in the car, it became the duty of various members of the family each to nurse one effigy—paint, feathers, and all—as we went on.

For we went on. It was Howard's judgment that, as between one bedless spot in the desert and another, Keams Cañon was better than where we were, and then, too, there was that irresistible impulse of the motorist to be moving. We went on.

Again the pick and shovel. Again the wonderful, beautiful desert, again the washes and buttes and lizards and prairie-dogs. One of our drivers stuttered. He had the most enthralling stutter I have ever heard. In the army in France it is said that officers camped on his trail to listen, and that on the transport home, he was lifted bodily from below decks and transported permanently to the officers' mess. He had been to "Mo-mo-monte Ca-ca-ar-lo," and now he was with us.

So Bucko, who was the most genial of persons, would see a prairie-dog and try to indicate the fact to the people in his car.

"T-t-t-there g-g-goes a p-p-p-p—hell, it's gone!"

And at last we reached Keams Cañon, and at the side of the desert valley parked our cars. Further along in the cañon there was an Indian school, and the next day, when it was too late, we learned of an empty dormitory where we might have slept. But we did not know. There was a well of good water, and for the moment that sufficed. It did not take the place of beds, naturally, but we now knew that when the desert traveler has a trading-post for sardines, cheese, crackers, and canned fruit, and has besides a well of water, he has the desert luxuries.

By the waters of Babylon (Keams Cañon), therefore, we sat down and wept. Not precisely, of course, but there was a small drop in our morale. The evening was cool and getting cooler. The trader had closed the store and was eating his supper, and from the house there came the soft, insidious aroma of frying meat and boiling coffee!

Then Howard and the drivers held a consultation. We emptied our cars, and piled on the desert sand our Lares and Penates, our dolls and baskets and pottery and suitcases, and the drivers started back at a breakneck pace for such necessaries as they could bring.

Things began to brighten. Some one built a camp-fire. The Banker's wife borrowed the trader's stove and a coffee-pot, and made a great

pail of coffee. And—oh, frabjous day,—as Lewis Carroll would say—came the usual angel of the tourist in the Indian reservation, the school superintendent, and whispered something in my ear. He could not take the party, but he could take me, and a gentleman I am related to by marriage, and give us bedroom and bath.

Some time I shall write an ode to that man and to his wife, to their chairs to sit in, and their tub to bathe in, and their beds to sleep in. I dare say I am softening. Time was when I held less strongly to the bodily comforts, but that time is gone.

We stole away. It were but cruelty to flaunt our good fortune. And late that night came back the cars, after a frenzied journey, bringing tents and bedding and food for breakfast. As there were no tent-poles, however, the tents were laid on the ground, and under their canvas tops crept the desert caravaners, to sleep and perchance to dream.

The next morning we stepped unwitting into quiet tragedy.

From the reservation that day a hundred children, Navajo, and Hopi, were to be sent to California to school, there to remain for a period of years. Twenty-one children had already been brought in. They were grouped together in the school-administration building, all ages and all

emotions, smiling, weeping, stoical. And outside, sitting huddled in their blankets on a concrete wall, were such figures of grief as I never hope to see again.

Sad-faced victims of civilization, unable to grasp what lay beyond this enforced separation, seeing in it only something akin to the slaughter of the first-born, they neither moved nor spoke.

To our caravan, usually a matter of eager interest, they scarcely lifted their eyes. Men and women, they crouched and waited, as one waits for a death in the house.

The Cañon de Chelly (pronounced Shay) was fifty-seven miles away. It was seventy-five miles away. It was one hundred and fifty miles away. And by persistence we had obtained enough gasoline to take us ninety miles. Between Keams Cañon and the Cañon de Chelly there was nothing. Nothing, that is, but desert. Part of the way there was not even a trail.

Afterward, we learned of another route, shorter and well marked, but that day we were, after the trail turned off toward Gallup, a-sail on an uncharted sea.

Where the trail turned off toward Gallup, we stopped and lunched on sardines, crackers, cheese, and canned fruit. Then we left the trail and struck across the desert. But there was the prob-

lem of the trucks. How would they know where to leave the trail and strike off across the desert? We looked about for a stake, but that portion of the desert was completely wanting in stakes. It was, indeed, wanting in everything but the usual desert commodities—sand, sage-brush, sunburn, and solitude. However, we were developing certain qualities of ingenuity. One of the despised cracker-boxes was laid on the ground to indicate direction, and a strip from a pocket-handkerchief tied to the sage-brush, was to catch the drivers' eyes.

We had left the Hopis far behind, and were now in the Navajo country. The Hopi reservation is within the Navajo, and, we began to think, was a small oasis of pleasantness and kindness in a sea of suspicion. For the Navajo is not the Hopi. He is the nomad who drove the Hopi to his mountain fastnesses. The Navajo is a fighter, the Hopi a farmer. And the Navajo remains to-day less amenable to discipline, harder and more cruel, and certainly less pleasant than the Hopi. It is not hard to distinguish them. Both wear their hair in clubs on the nape of the neck; both wear the *banda* to confine it. But the Hopi, broader-faced, less aquiline, and shorter of stature, may also be known by the bobbing of the hair cut over his ears.

The desert had been growing even wilder and

more beautiful. We took a tortuous way among buttes of red sandstone, and at last climbed a mesa over a road that would have been hard going for a horse. Below, but still miles away, was a green spot which marked the oasis of cottonwood trees at Chin Lee. Not that we were past our troubles. We lurched and swayed down into the bed of a dry river, followed it, climbed out like monstrous lumbering insects, and a half-hour later reached the "hotel." Ninety miles, it was, from Keams Cañon.

It was not a hotel. It made no claim to being a hotel. And when Mr. Garcia, the young Mexican who ran the trading-post, found himself surrounded by a throng which wanted rooms, baths, drinking-water, beds, and food, all instantly, he simply threw up his hands. He had three or four extra rooms, but no facilities for food. And we were twenty-odd, and eight drivers.

We sat down in the store, on the steps outside, anywhere, and waited for we knew not what. We looked over the pawned jewelry, for every trading-post has its locked case containing quaint and beautiful pledges, bought rugs and bracelets, drank tepid pop, and—waited. There was nothing else to do. In a straight line a hundred miles of desert separated us from the railroad, and besides, we were out of gasoline. But more than that, the caves of the cliff-dwellers were all

around us now, and we had come to discover the cliff-dwellers. We were in the center of the archeologist's delight.

It has been my experience that, when things on a camping-trip begin to go wrong, as they always do at least once, they go on almost to the breaking-point and then suddenly mend. They mended now, abruptly and completely, for Howard had been looking round, and he returned to make a little speech.

"Friends," he said, "round the corner of the butte is an Indian school. It is closed for the summer, but two saintly women and a miracle of a doctor have offered you beds" (cheers), "shower-baths" (loud cheers), "and hot food." (Wild and hysterical yelling, mutterings of coffee and such words as steak, potatoes and so on.)

The school opened two dormitories for us, one for men and one for women, and in a half-hour the green tank on the butte above was suffering a hemorrhage. Such splashings and washings, such grunts of ecstasy, such brushing and combing, and washing of pocket-handkerchiefs! And after that came supper, consisting, it is true, of hash made of canned corn beef, but good hash, baked beans, potatoes, and strong, hot coffee.

We were content. We did not care when the trucks came. We sat out on the front veranda of one of the buildings and ruminated, and far

off, by the trading-post, a group of Indians sang. They sang, close-huddled, their faces turned toward the center. Their range was small, covering only six notes apparently, and the effect was weird and monotonous.

"Hi-o-ho, Anna!" it seemed to be, over and over.

The moon was full. It turned the sand-dunes to pale gold, and a lonely Navajo, loping homeward, into a Bedouin. Indeed, the Navajos have a sort of Arab aquilinity and gravity. A fierce and lawless tribe, predatory and acquisitive by nature, they have the best horses of all our Indians, are stock-breeders like the Arabs, and nomads like the Arabs, too, they put their art into the practical and portable form of blankets and rugs.

That night, a dozen women returned to their boarding-school days and undressed in a dormitory. On the pillows of the white-iron beds where had wept so many homesick Indian children, lay now the permanent waves, the braids, and the patent curlers of the far East. And outside in the wash-room, from a leaking faucet, there sounded the cool drip of *water*.

The lights were off for the summer, and we had to use our electric torches. Came from a bed a sleepy voice:

"I've got on my new silk pajamas, and nobody can see them."

Instantly a dozen figures sat up. Instantly a dozen flash-lights were focused.

"Stand up!" we commanded. The pajamas stood up on top of the bed. "Turn round! They're lovely. Now go to sleep and forget them."

The next day we saw our first cliff-dwelling.

On good horses we rode up the Cañon de Chelly. Fortunately, there had been no rain, and the cañon was safe. During wet weather it is filled with quicksand.

The Cañon de Chelly contains the White House, which must certainly be made a national monument if it is to be preserved. Not only should it be preserved, but it should be known and visited. A fair road from Gallup, New Mexico, makes it accessible, and because it is not on the beaten trail of the tourist, the visitor may become the discoverer, at any moment.

Ascent to the White House was difficult, impossible, indeed, without ropes. Clinging like cats, Tom and two or three of our men made a portion of the ascent, carrying a long weighted rope. After innumerable attempts, the weight slipped over an old timber and slid down at their feet. They went up the rope, hand over hand, while we watched enviously from below.

I have before me as I write what I am told is probably the rim of an ancient basket, but which

I like to believe is part of an old bowstring. It is incredibly strong, and consists of vegetable fibers, wrapped with leather cut almost as fine as thread. One of the men picked it up inside the White House itself.

I did not see the mummy. An extra ride of sixteen miles did not appeal to me, and, besides, the wind was rising. Fine clouds of sand, whirling like waterspouts, danced along the bottom of the cañon, seeking, as is the way with sand, some haven of eye or ear or nose. Having lunched on sandwiches and coffee, I turned back, to ride slowly homeward. Such, at least, was my intention. But my horse was in a hurry. Head down against the sand, grazing the edges of cliffs and barking my shins against boulders, he cut that sand-storm like a knife.

Now and then I protested. I wished to examine the Indian paintings on the walls. I wanted to climb into an easy cliff-house and sit and think about being a cave-dweller. I wanted to recline behind some wall in my sanctuary and thumb my nose at my imaginary enemies. But the horse was in a hurry. I went home.

And home it really was. The trucks were in.

Now we had had, the night before, a dream. And this dream was that the trucks would come, and that we would set up our camp in the cottonwoods, and luxuriate for once in shade. We

would hear the branches blow overhead in the wind and we would sleep on pine-needles, or whatever it is that cottonwoods shed.

But it was not to be. In Howard's absence, Jimmy had located the camp, and Jimmy's specialty was food, not romance. Over the last sand-dune I rode, and there, along the dusty road in front of the trading-post, shamelessly revealed to the traveling Indian eye, were our tents. Not even Jimmy's good supper that night quite restored him to favor.

The truck crews were weary, and Joe was exhausted. Jimmy, too, had borne the heat and burden of the day. So we stayed by the roadside, exposed to the public gaze, and thereafter the seekers for shade and leafy things carried over their playing-cards, their knitting, and their books, and listened to the stutterer, in an absorbed group under a tree, saying,

"G-g-g-give me t-t-t-t-three."

There had been, when I arrived at the camp from the cañon, a white sheep tied to a rear spring of one of the trucks—a nice woolly white sheep, which should have been on rollers. Later on, it disappeared, and that night we had boiled mutton for supper—boiled mutton, boiled potatoes, stewed fresh apples and fresh bread and butter. Perhaps I am overemphatic about food

in these articles, but it is a vital matter for the desert camper.

The Navajos are polygamists, and five years ago, when a ruling was made against polygamy, they revolted, and troops were called out. However, on receiving permission to keep the wives they already possessed, the revolt died.

"What about divorce?" I asked Tom that night.

"Just separate," he said laconically.

"And can they marry again?"

"Sure!" he replied. "After time pick up somebody else."

The old marriage ceremony, still used but now followed by a legalized one, was simple enough, as Tom described it. It revolved round those close-woven baskets familiar to travelers in the west as marriage-baskets, and in which the design in color does not quite meet in one place.

The man sits in his hogan, with his own people on his right, the bride's on his left. The bride leaves her hogan, carrying corn mush before her in her marriage-basket. She puts a basin of water beside the basket on the floor, and then sits on the left side of the groom. Taking his right hand, she pours water on it and washes it. He then washes hers. After that, she takes the basket and, with the opening in the design to the East (all hogans face to the East) holds it before the man. He then, with a corn-tassel, makes

lines through it, east to west and south to north. Both taste the mush, lifting it to their lips between the second and third fingers. He again makes the cross, and except for the lengthy advice of both fathers, the marriage is complete.

I like that ceremony. No bridesmaids or trousseau; no best man and ushers and ring and trunk; no checks and letters of thanks to worry about; no florist and no awning-company and no caterer. Just a bowl of corn-meal mush, which is easy to make, a basket, and two fathers. But wait a moment. There is something else. Unlike the Hopis, who buy their husbands, the Navajos buy their wives. They pay from four to twelve horses for them. And, after that they let them make a loom, and raise sheep and clean and spin the wool, and hunt round for vegetable dyes, and become rug-weavers. As the lady exchanges the rugs for groceries for the family, perhaps she is cheap at even a dozen horses.

And such rugs as they can make! Out of the most sordid hogan there can come purities of white and colored wool, imagination of design, and accuracy of weaving that are amazing. And the pattern, remember, is carried in one small and not overtidy head. As she works—and into it what dreams may she not weave?—she rolls up the finished portion and does not look at it again. She may not be able to count beyond her fingers,

but her complicated design will be accurate to a thread.

Look closely at your Indian rugs. Go back of its place of purchase to this: a tiny hogan of mud and branches, alone and lost in a vast and cruel desert. Outside, in the sun, a crude loom, and before it a small and patient figure endlessly toiling. Not far away is the herd of sheep, the white for the white wool, the black for the black. Day after day the patient figure labors, putting into her work all her starved instinct for beauty, all the order and precision which has no place in her life. Follow her as, astride her horse, the blanket rolled behind her, she rides alone, bareheaded, over the hot and waterless trail, to receive the payment in not greatly more than the value of the wool. For rugs are sold by the pound. Her labor she does not count.

Let me quote here from my diary, written the next day.

"Have finished house-cleaning the tent, shaking sand out of blankets and camera, and brushing floor of tent with clothes-brush. Others have gone to Cañon del Muerto, where Kit Carson and others pursued a band of fugitive Indians, and where, according to Tom, the bloody hand-prints of the children yet remain. But even bloody hand-prints will not lure me into another saddle to-day.

"In the cook-tent, Jimmy is singing 'Juanita.' I don't know how he can sing, for we have no gasoline. In front of the trading-post, a row of Indians stares fixedly at the camp. I have bought a ring, but prices are going up—five dollars now instead of a dollar and a half.

"Earl has just bought a sheepskin at the post, for twenty cents, to mend a broken cushion."

Then I grew philosophical, evidently.

"This is a man's country. Women fade in it early. Indian women are either girls or old women. There is, for them, no placid middle age."

The differences between the Hopis and the Navajos are very curious—differences which no amount of propinquity ever changes. They are antagonistic always. They speak different tongues, and we were told the Hopis have no sign-language. The Navajos can not talk to them. The Hopi has preserved his own religion, but on the surface will only accept the Protestant Church. The Navajo also has his own religion, but accepts the Catholic faith.

It is doubtful if any Christian church makes any real impression on either of them, or indeed on any tribe. The virtues of the church may be taught them, but never entirely its faith. Secretly, if not in public, they still practise the

rites of their forefathers, are nature- or sun-worshipers, and add the extra religion as they would a second blanket in the winter.

"If one god is good, two are better," said one of my Blackfeet to me.

Back to camp that afternoon rode a band of scarlet-faced, blistered, and utterly weary cliff-dwelling enthusiasts, who made thereon affidavit that the remainder of the party had suddenly gone mad, and had gone seven miles further.

I bow low before the indomitable spirit of the born sightseer. I would not go fourteen extra miles on a horse in a desert at a temperature over a hundred and twenty degrees in the sun for anything short of a bucket of ice.

Let me quote here from my diary:

"Matches are growing scarce. It is reported that Bucko" (the stutterer) "has won them all under the cottonwoods."

As no gasoline had as yet been freighted from Gallup, we prepared to settle down until it came. And now Tom began to show new and valuable qualities. Speak but the desire, and Tom clapped his hands, and it was done. So now, without knowing precisely what it was, we asked for a sand-painting.

Tom hesitated before he clapped his hands.

"It's lot of trouble," he said. "Medicine-men

got to get up early and hunt colored stone. Then they grind up, hours and hours. And then they make picture. Must destroy picture same day, too."

We waited.

"Two dollar each person here, eh?" he inquired.

At the haste with which we agreed, his face fell. He saw that he could have made it three dollars. But he cheered later, mounted a horse, and rode away.

All the following day there was a quiet bustle going on at the medicine-lodge on a near-by mesa. Early in the morning, as Tom had said, went out the priests into the desert, to those places they knew of, and there found and brought in the minerals of many colors, to be ground to fine powder with infinite labor by hand. Then came the intricate process of the picture, a vast canvas of sand spread about on the floor of the medicine-lodge, and surrounded when finished by feathered prayer sticks.

At sunset, then, we went to the lodge, and walked into a scene that might have been in the Holy Land—the wide, bare stretches of the desert, the low-roofed house, and, watching us with wide calm eyes, a flock of sheep and goats with the shepherd crouching by a tiny fire. But even here came the dissensions and cupidity of man.

A tall priest was waiting. He spoke a little English, and he said,

"How much pay, you folks?"

Rapid calculation revealed that we had paid fifty dollars, and so we told him.

"Huh!" he said, "Tom he pay us fifteen!"

There was a time when battle seemed imminent, for Tom, when he appeared, was not inclined to come over. At last, however, he produced a huge roll of bills, peeled off the outer one, looked at it wistfully, and gave it up.

The ceremony proceeded.

Ceremony it was, for the Indians regard certain sand-paintings as highly curative, and it appeared that their sense of thrift told them not to waste this one. The result was one of the most impressive rites I have ever seen.

One of the cars had brought over a sick Indian woman, and she was to be healed.

The medicine-lodge, neatly built of timber and adobe, was a circle of about thirty feet in diameter, with a round opening in the roof. On the flat earth floor beneath this opening was the sand-painting, some twelve feet each way, and of extraordinary beauty of color and design. Three priests sat on sheepskins at the side.

Of the symbolic qualities of the painting, those who have studied them must write. Human figures; the life-giver of the desert, the corn-stalk; their ancestors, the cliff-dwellers; the sky; the rainbow; the male and female principles; gods

of earth and gods of water are all represented. The knowledge of this painting has been handed down from son to son for countless generations.

The sick woman, in her bare feet, entered and sat down on the base of the corn-stalk, after sprinkling an offering of meal toward the priests. The seated priests then began a low chant, to the accompaniment of the ceremonial rattles, while one of their number anointed the woman. This he did by touching the palms of his hands, first to certain portions of the painting and then touching her, on back and chest, arms and feet.

The chant changed, grew louder and shriller. The medicine-man sprinkled sacred water on the sand and gave the woman some to drink. Again he sprinkled the sand and again she drank. The chant fell to a low minor.

From outside was brought in a bowl of glowing wood embers. The lodge was now almost entirely dark, the woman's figure a gray silhouette, patient and touching. On the embers a powder was thrown, and the air was filled with a sharp and pungent odor. The priests noisily inhaled the smoke.

And now, in his bare fingers and without haste, the officiating priest took glowing embers to the woman and placed them in the sand beside her. She was given the bowl of water and held it for a moment. The chant changed again. It rose,

powerful and compelling, as though to force the attention of the gods, while the woman poured the sacred water over the glowing coals.

As the embers died, so did the chant. The lodge was dark and still, the ceremony over.

We were now to go on to Crystal. The trucks had gone ahead. Hereafter we meant to drive them ahead, like cows. Then, if they broke down, we intended to camp round them. But we had not reckoned on that road.

After an hour of slow climbing, of watching them ahead lumber and sway up rocky ascents and stop panting to breathe, we passed them; not to see them again until in another state and under different circumstances, we met them again south of the railroad at Zuni, New Mexico.

Our climbing had taken us out of the low desert into the high. On a beautiful wooded plateau, over seven thousand feet in elevation, we lunched in the shade beside a spring. Lunched, and watched, as usual, for the trucks. They did not come.

At last we went on. All afternoon we traveled on those spicy uplands, with vistas of mountain and desert of great beauty, going slowly to give the trucks a chance to catch us. And at last, late in the afternoon, we got to Fort Defiance.

It was a quiet Sunday. We had been ten days

without news of any sort, and here at last was a white man's town. Only forty or fifty miles to the south lay Gallup. Gallup, with mail and telegrams, and eight days before a play of mine had opened in New York! For eight days I had tried to forget "Spanish Love," tried not to wonder whether it had failed or succeeded. "The Bat," a second play, was to open the next day. And while we sat in the cars in that street at Fort Defiance, came the Banker alongside and said, apropos of nothing:

"There's a hotel at Gallup."

"Any news of the trucks?" our car inquired.

There was no news of them. There opened up suddenly in our midst a schism. There were the true adventurers, who meant to see Crystal or die. And there were the weak sisters, to whom I belonged, who suddenly saw in Gallup not, as before, merely a place to stretch one's legs from the limited, but a sort of paradise of ice, baths, beds, post-offices, and telegraph stations.

Late that evening three cars, still bearing under their dust the mud of the Little Colorado, stopped before the hotel at Gallup, and from them there emerged twelve wild-eyed and unkempt individuals, who carried and piled about them in that tidy lobby a vast collection of dust-covered rugs, pottery, baskets, motor garments, suitcases and thermos bottles. The women wore riding clothes

or camping garb in the last stages of disrepair. Clutched in my arms was a Turkish towel, forgotten and thrown into the car at the last moment.

And as with one voice this motley crew said,

"Rooms, *with baths.*"

Gallup, of course, was but an interlude. When our crystal-gazers had returned, we were then to go south into New Mexico, the Zuni country.

Bathed and fed, the trucks forgotten, we had time then to remember the wonders we had seen. It had been worth while, as always are beauty and ancient custom, and the ruins left by those who so long ago have gone before. There should be soon a procession of motor-cars touring our great deserts, each self-supporting and with a keg of good water. The motorist may tire of even the most beautiful scenery, but when he has such points of interest as Oraibi and Walpi, when he has the snake-dance and the sand-picture, when he may buy for a mere song the treasures of the desert, he has more than scenery. He has interest.

The crystal-gazers blew in late the next day. They reported, as we had expected, such rugs and jewelry as we had never seen. But they mentioned incidentally that the trucks had not appeared.

FIVE: Adventuring de Luxe

FIVE

ADVENTURING DE LUXE

THE irrigation ditch is a wonderful thing. From now on, here and there, we were to camp by irrigation ditches, and I developed for them a feeling akin to that one has for old mossy wells and the clear springs of one's childhood. It is true that we twice camped outside the back gardens of a surprised and interested town populace, but even there we found the irrigation ditch.

No longer does the babbling trout-stream hold my sole affection; the torpid movement of water in a ditch in a desert country thrills me through and through. One of the most touching pictures in my memory is that of the head of the family, crouched on a mud bank with a mirror between his knees, dipping his shaving-brush into the life-saving stream.

From Gallup, we started south. In the portion of New Mexico we were to visit lay the Zuni Indians, Inscription Rock, archeologists, the petrified forest, and more jewelry.

"Is there water?" I inquired anxiously of a driver who had lived there.

"About as much as a snake has hips," was his unexpected reply.

We had not seen the trucks. They had passed like phantoms through Gallup and had gone on ahead, by a short route, to meet us at Zuni. So we were free, bathed, and cheerful.

Things had gone well with us that morning. We had neither had to rescue nor be rescued, and for a day or two that held. We became, for the time, sightseers instead of adventurers. And so we went to Inscription Rock, the most precious historical cliff in the world, and to-day inscribed like a cemetery with the names of every idiot with a penknife or a stone-mason's chisel who has visited it.

What a queer world this was that the old Spanish conquerors visited! Desert plains and fantastic rocks and cliffs, and, opposing them at every step, painted savages. They came on, in spite of heat and thirst, wearing heavy mail, their horses protected by leather housings. And with them came always the Franciscan priests, in their gray cassocks, carrying the cross of their faith. They came for wealth, for conquest, but most of all out of that spirit of pure adventure which led Columbus across the sea. So the soldier adventurers came, conquered, and returned, but the priests stayed on, valiantly fighting for the savage souls, militantly baptizing and saying mass, dying

by violence with the cross upheld and their eyes fixed on the pitiless burning sky.

And to the foot of this great rock had come the first soldiers and priests, and had there set themselves down to rest and to drink of its cool spring. Then, because they were surrounded by enemies and might never get back home again, they carved on the cliff a permanent record:

"The Most Illustrious Sir and Captain General of the provinces of New Mexico for the King our Master, passed by here on his return from the villages of Zuni on the 29th of July, 1629; and them [the Indians] he put in peace at their request, they asking his favor as vassals of His Majesty. And anew they gave obedience; of which he did with persuasiveness, zeal, and prudence, like a most Christian [the word is effaced] such a careful and gallant soldier of unending and exalted memory."

I hope he did not carve that himself. And I am dubious, too, as to his methods of persuasiveness and as to how he put the Zunis into peace. There is a peace called death. I rather think he conquered them first and then made them vassals at their request and at the end of a sword. I may be doing him an injustice. But I will say this: whoever carved that inscription was a carver. It still stands, along with the records of those other gallant adventurers who likewise had brought

along a carver, and who, too, left their names and the dates of their passing. And all around, above and below and beside these extraordinary and precious records, are the reminders that vandals travel as well as brave Spanish gentlemen. "Joe Smith and wife," "John S. Robinson," and others of their ilk have carved their silly names in the pink sandstone.

They must be chiseled away, and these records of our early history protected against sand and storm. The rock is our property as a nation, and it must be preserved. It bears even tragedy on its face, as thus: "Passed on 23d of March 1632 to the avenging of the death of Father Letrado." And on the very top of the rock are the ruins of a prehistoric Indian village.

With all its historic information as to the Spanish adventurers, the rock has its own interest for us. Long it lay, unknown and undiscovered, until one of our own soldier adventurers found it again. And he, too, left his valuable record. Captain Simpson, returning from the Mexican War in 1849, came upon the rock, read its inscriptions, filed his own modest entry on the stone cliff-face and went on, later to tell the world of his great discovery.

We reached Zuni that night at twilight. One moment we were riding along the desert; the next, so completely do its buildings merge into the

color of the earth, we were without warning in the town itself, a mysterious place, hauntingly unreal and terrifying in the dusk, with its moving, silent, dark-clad figures, its barking dogs and its squealing pigs.

Always, before this, we had camped outside the Indian towns. Now we were in it, a part of its life. Before our fascinated eyes the business of the town went on during the period of our stay. Naked children came and bathed in the shallow, muddy river. To the same river came young girls, with earthen water-jars on their heads, and having filled them, carried them away. At night, great fires were built in the outdoor ovens, and in them later the corn was parched. Dogs fought and ran, yelping, and over the primitive wooden bridge across the shallow Zuni River passed silent, blanketed figures, small, dainty-footed burros, and wide-eyed, curious, back-looking children.

Such is Zuni. Such, too, was Zuni, before it was put to peace three hundred years ago. The Indian of the Southwest has not changed. His towns are the same. He is the same. Only—he has remained a vassal.

After a time, it occurred to us that we did not see Jimmy. Nor the trucks. Nor the tents. Nor supper. But Zuni is a largish town. We began a frenzied search for our outfit, at first with no result. And it became increasingly evident that

Zuni did not care whether we ate or not. It was callous. It was cold and inhospitable. It did not know a word of English, and it had had too much of persuasiveness, zeal, and prudence.

Then we found Jimmy. The cook-and-dining-tents were up, and supper was on the fire. The gasoline-flares were going, and our places at the table laid, each with its paper napkin. Over the stove Jimmy was cooking, and the head man of the village was squatted beside a dish-pan, ready for work.

But where were our tents?

Joe came up—Joe who had been in our noisy conference about the cottonwood trees—and revealed the secret. He had found some trees for us. True, they were in the missionary's back yard, but they were trees. Aided by Joe and a flashlight, we found them at last, spread out our bedding-rolls, looked at the trees closely for caterpillars, and were not disappointed, and went back for supper.

But before I went, I had made a discovery, which I had not the heart to reveal to Joe. The missionary's house was sewered into a well in the yard. And from that well, some two feet from my tent, there rose a ventilation pipe.

The Banker sat on the ground in front of his tent and searched in a bag, in the darkness, for his night-garments. Suddenly he sniffed.

"Funny thing," he said: "I've always heard of the odors of Indian villages, but if you ask me, this town has it all over the others."

We ventured but a little way through the town that night. It had too many black, mysterious enclosures. The blanketed figures looked stealthy, and the Zuni has a bad reputation for thievery.

Now, of us all, Annabelle had the worst case of Indian dollitis, and on the next day she proceeded with her search.

At luncheon, Annabelle came in breathless. She had found a doll—a most wonderful one—but she could not buy it. The Indian woman had indeed first sold it to her, then burst into tears and took it back. During the meal, however, came a messenger from the woman, saying she would sell it. So Annabelle went back, and the deal was completed, when once again the squaw took back the doll.

Our interest was roused, especially as, during the afternoon, the matter began to take on almost a tribal aspect. Evidently the doll was an important one. For the Pueblo Indian's doll is not a plaything. It is by way of being a religious image. Made to represent the Kachinas, or ancestral gods, they are for the instruction of the young, and they undoubtedly sometimes become, in themselves, small fetishes of good fortune. The parting with this doll was a solemn matter.

At five o'clock apparently, counsel had prevailed against cupidity, and all bets were off. But late that evening, as we sat in the dining-tent, an Indian girl arrived, wearing a dark shawl, and under the shawl was the doll itself. The money and doll changed hands in the darkness, and Annabelle was gravely warned to hide the image. So far all seemed to be well.

By next day the cook-tent had developed into a center of extreme local interest, particularly to children and to the old and very poor. After meals, Howard, his kindly face aglow, would stand at the entrance, filling and passing out plates of food and tin cups of coffee and lemonade. Poor desert people, their sanctuary had not proved a sanctuary. It gave them at the best a scanty living—a little mutton and corn-meal. Here and there was a wealthy dwelling, where in the corral were horses and in the farmyard modern reapers, but the rank and file had barely enough to support them. Even the garbage scraps were seized and eagerly devoured. . . .

Like the colored woman who had just naturally lost her taste for her husband, Bill had begun to lose his taste for the Indians. The other drivers, too, were surfeited with the long, idle days in which we bartered and bought. But now, at least, we were to face again toward our starting-point.

Our departure from Zuni was marked by a renewed frenzy of barter, but this time on the part of the Indians. They offered by signs to purchase my black silk neckerchief, and at the car I found a large chief trying on my leather motor-coat with covetousness in his very touch. He finally offered me ten dollars for it. But particularly they liked our jewelry. They offered me any amount of turquoise-and-silver jewelry for a pearl-and-moonstone pin I wore, and there was great dispute as to the nature of the stones in a diamond-cluster ring. I gave it to them to examine, and it passed from hand to hand amid excited comment and argument. Then a chief took off a silver ring and offered to exchange.

Beyond Oho Caliente the lead car stuck in a wash, and again there came the familiar pick and shovels. If Oho Caliente means hot water, which is my recollection, we were in it for a time. And at one place there was a sign which made some of us homesick and all of us laugh. For it was a real sign, with an arrow pointing east, and it said, "New York."

Joe and the Ford had become our guides, for Joe hailed from the Mormon town of St. Johns, our next stop. Joe, it developed, had picked out a place for us to camp. After the success at Zuni, he felt that camping-sites were his specialty. So we followed at his heels until Joe stopped, rose in

the Ford with magnificent gestures, and indicated our location.

It was a large empty lot at the corner of the two main streets.

Immediately we got out and expostulated. We did not propose to be exhibited to make a Mormon holiday. We were not a traveling circus.

"I had some hesitation in getting out of the car in the state of my trousers," said the Head, "but I'm darned if I'll get out of my trousers on State Street."

"You wanted trees," Joe protested.

"We want privacy, too," we retorted.

It was then that Joe remembered his uncle. Eventually, we camped on a side-street behind Joe's uncle's house, driving away divers cows to do so, and by the bank of an irrigating ditch we settled ourselves with extreme comfort for the night.

St. Johns is a prosperous, tree-shaded oasis in the desert. Between it and the railroad in a straight line lies fifty miles of desert. By road it is nearer a hundred, and all its supplies must be freighted across that dreary waste. Yet it gave us soda-water and cold-cream, candy and moving pictures. And it appeared to have a small boy as its leading citizen.

In the drug store this boy, head hardly above the counter, officiated with ability that was almost

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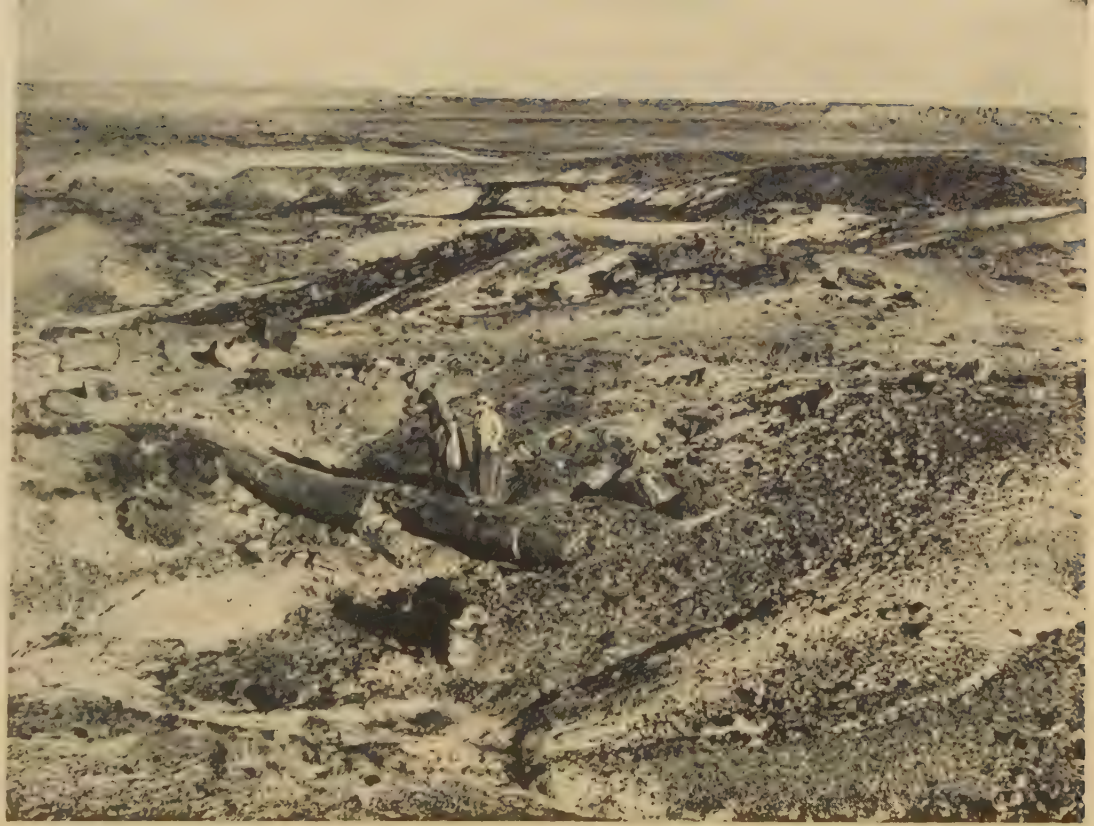
NAVAJO ARCH IN CAÑON DE CHELLY, ARIZONA

The cliff dwellers are doubly protected. They built their homes in caves and rain turned the bottom of the cañons to quicksand.



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WHAT REMAINED OF THE PETRIFIED FOREST
after the male Rinehartsh had taken the rest.

genius. Without batting an eye, he saw twenty-odd thirst-frenzied souls descending on him; without a quiver he filled and refilled glasses and mixed sundaes. We lost him when we returned to Jimmy and supper, to find him at the movies that night, selling tickets. When the performance began, he ran the automatic piano. If he isn't the mayor now, he will be.

In the morning we went on to the Petrified Forest.

What I think a number of us expected to find in the Petrified Forest was a petrified forest; that is, great trees erect, with leaves and the usual trimmings of trees. But all stone. No wind to blow those shining, eternally silent leaves; fossil birds, perhaps on fossil branches, fossil bugs, and fossil squirrels. But it was not to be.

Not that it is not extraordinary. But it is not spectacular. Out on the desert in the sun, and covering square miles of territory, lie these ancient shattered trunks, turned to pure mineral of lovely colors. That is, they did lie there, for after a short time came trailing toward the cars divers enthusiasts, carrying, with or between them, this new and unexpected booty. Car-springs began to sag with future paper-weights; the floors were covered with embryo inkstands and clock-bases and door-holders.

What remained of the Petrified Forest we left

there, judging this best, as the forest has been extensively advertised.

It was at Holbrook that Annabelle heard again from the doll. We had stopped for lunch, and later had lined up, a ragged dusty crowd, outside the shower-bath, where we could listen wistfully to the luxurious splashings from within. And we had reappeared, to rest on the veranda of the hotel before going on to camp in one of the leading streets of St. Joseph, when a tall, sunburned gentleman in a sombrero appeared before us and indicated that he was a sheriff.

"Sorry to trouble you folks," he said, "but there's a little trouble down at Zuni."

" 'Trouble!' " said the Banker. "What sort of trouble?"

"It appears that a member of your party bought a sacred doll there, and the tribe's upset about it. Against the law, too, you know."

We tried not to look at Annabelle, but our eyes flew to her and stayed there. I could not, with every effort, look away.

"That's ridiculous!" said the Head angrily. "Do you mean to say that that doll—that if any of us *did* buy a doll—it is unlawful?"

"That was a peculiar sort of doll," said the sheriff, in his soft voice. "I don't like to make any trouble, but I guess I'll have to look through your things."

He got up from the porch railing, and Annabelle turned a sickly green. But at that moment he saw Howard, asleep in his chair across the porch.

"Don't happen to belong to his party, do you?" he inquired.

"Yes," we said shortly; "we are his party."

He considered.

"Fine fellow," he said. "Known him for years. Wouldn't like to give him any trouble." He bit the end off a cigar and reflected. "I'll go back to the office," he said, "and see if there isn't some way out. I'd sure hate to put any member of his party in the jail."

Half an hour later, Annabelle emerged from the post-office, having consigned to it a mysterious parcel some twelve inches long. Not until then did we breathe freely. And not until some time after did we learn that the Banker had met the sheriff in the barber shop, and that we had paid in full for our laughter the day the Banker had sat on the chimney.

Now, for some time the nervous women of the party had been looking forward at night to terrible depths and unguarded precipices, for we were to finish at the Grand Cañon. More than that, we were to camp overnight in the gorge.

And whatever the plans for the future, there is no elevator there as yet.

The trails of the Grand Cañon have a peculiar characteristic. They shrink. Between the time some people have come up and left their mules and sat in hot water to take out the soreness, and their next meeting with those who have not gone down, the trails frequently diminish from their normal width three feet or more to six inches. At no time, also, is the gorge less than a mile, or the wall below anything but completely vertical. This peculiarity also extends to the mules; they cease in retrospect to be willing creatures, only induced by kicking to break into a walk, and become rearing and stampeding beasts, determined on suicide.

"Just room, imagine, for the mule to place one foot in front of another," it is by the time the limited reaches Omaha. "At one turn, with the gorge a mile straight down, my mule stampeded, and leaped to a rock above the trail," is Chicago. By the time New York is reached, the survivor's friends are shaking his hand and congratulating him on his escape.

The truth is, of course, that the trails are absolutely safe. They are broad and well banked. The grades are sometimes very steep but mostly easy. Only rarely does one cling to the side of a precipice, and at those times the mules show no

suicidal tendency whatever. In fact, I never saw mules more determined to live.

Nevertheless, the round trip down the Hermit Trail and up the Bright Angel is an achievement. It requires endurance of no low order, but, fortunately, the muscles used holding back in the saddle are not the ones used in leaning forward on the ascent. It is more than thirty miles, that round from rim to rim, seven down the Hermit, twenty along the bottom of the gorge, which is still fourteen hundred feet above the river itself, and three up the Bright Angel.

There is a good permanent camp at the foot of the Hermit Trail. There, having been assigned a tent-cottage, I parted from my mule without regret, for he had begun to pall on me, and lay down to wonder whether I could stand twenty-three miles the next day. But, as I have said before, we had with us that sightseeing element which had a mania for collecting sights, and it now came outside and bellowed that we were only a mile or so from the Colorado, and the mules were ready.

I did not, just then, care about the Colorado. I wanted to lie on my bed and reflect about the next day, and the wonders of the great gorge, and supper and various things. But I went. After all, what was the use of reflecting about the

gorge? It was too big and deep for one mind. It was as beyond thought as it was beyond words.

With groans, from mule and rider, I mounted again and sought the stream which has done this mighty bit of hydraulic engineering. Or hasn't, depending on one's theory about the cañon. Shall I ever forget the dispute between a junior member of the family and the driver of the car we had taken on the rim, when the driver sat with one hand on the wheel and, facing back, argued at thirty miles an hour, on the unfenced brink of eternity?

If the Colorado dug the cañon, then it is a strong and virile stream, and its ugliness is as the ugliness of a strong man. If it did not, then it is a hideous, muddy, and quarrelsome little river, without a trout in it so far as we could discover. I had seen it at its terminal, where it makes an inglorious end in mud flats at the head of the Gulf of California, where blue and white heron stood in it, and mud geysers spouted on its banks, and I had said: "This is its age. It has spent its youthful beauty above." But it has no beauty. It has mystery and violence and mud, but no loveliness.

We were well-fed and housed at the Hermit Camp. Before we started the ascent, we wrote our names in the visitors' book, and there found a curious thing. It had seemed to be the custom

of those who had preceded us to burst into poetry. Here, rising all about them, were the vast walls and giant peaks of the cañon.

Poor little human dots, utterly invisible in their smallness from the rim of the cañon, living for a space in the most wonderful of all the world's wonders—did they write poetry about *it*? They did not.

They burst into song about their mules. As to the quality and tenor of those songs, they ran like this:

> I came on a mule named Elinore,
> I'll never do it any more.

At three o'clock that afternoon, after such descending and climbing, such wonders of chasm and beauty of color as can be found nowhere else, we reached the foot of the Bright Angel Trail, and cast our wistful eyes on and up, to where through a field glass we could see above, tiny specks against the sky, the heads of those craven souls who believe, or profess to believe, that the only way to see the cañon is from the rim.

Now the tales of shrinkage recurred to our minds. And there appeared no way up. Straight over our heads was our destination, and no discoverable cleft or chimney; and it began to rain. It thundered and lightened and rained. We took shelter in a hut, and watched our guides' faces, but they seemed quite calm. One of them

even stretched out on the floor and went to sleep while the thunder echoed and reechoed about us against the great walls, and a cold wind blew.

But our motto was like that of the youth who carried through the Alpine village 'mid snow and ice, his banner advertising a patent packing-material. Also, there was no other way out. We started to climb. And the Bright Angel Trail is a considerable climb. It rises between three and four thousand feet over a floor-space of a few acres. It is wide enough and safe enough, but it is not conducive to the peace of mind of nervous persons to look back and down. It is also not so joyous on a windy afternoon, when amid rain and wind-gusts one's mule takes a fancy to kick at the one behind.

But when the rain ceased and the sun came out, through the new-washed air came such a panorama of loveliness as held us silent—purple peaks and golden peaks, rose and blue, they rose above the cañon mists like fairy isles of some enchanted land.

For twenty-four hours I remained in bed, resting from my mule. Not for me the tom-toms calling to the Indian dance, the post-card writing, and the tourists down below. For me, the hot, relaxing tub, the tray with delicious food, the sunburn lotion, and a book. But at last I rose,

dressed and proceeded to the edge of the cañon. Standing there, I looked down. My glance was kindly, affectionate, even patronizing.

I sat down, slowly. I was moving slowly that day. And a woman beside me said,

"I am crazy to go down, but I am terrified to try it."

I smiled tolerantly.

"I've just come up," I said. "It is wonderful. And easy. Perfectly easy."

SIX: Below the Border in War Time

SIX

BELOW THE BORDER IN WARTIME

The entrance of Mary Elizabeth and myself into Mexico was marked by an incident which caused us for a moment to doubt the assurances we had had that that portion of the country was quiet. We were going to Mexicali, there to call on Colonel Cantu and request permission to visit his province.

Waiting at the border in Calexico for the various formalities through which we must go, we heard a shot fired. Whereupon Mary Elizabeth and I got out of our car, our curiosity being stronger than our knees, which shook, and saw some two hundred feet away an American sentry firing at a Mexican.

He was a little man, the Mexican, in a suit of blue overalls and carrying a bundle tied up in a bandana handkerchief. He had been turned back for lack of a passport, and had tried to cross the border by the simple and primitive method of slipping behind the customs house and walking across.

I daresay the trooper fired over his head. But

our first view was of the Mexican lying flat on the ground, and our first feeling was one of total lack of enthusiasm as to a Mexican venture.

"Don't you think," Mary Elizabeth observed as we crawled back into the car, "that they're horribly casual with their weapons around here?"

I did not say anything.

That night, however, making our camp list (coffee, flour, sunburn lotion, corn meal, canned tomatoes, bacon, iodine, peaches, sugar, baking powder, tooth powder, ham, cocoa, bandages, eggs, lard, goggles, oranges, gun oil, extra boot laces, and salt—all the usual confusion) I looked up at Mary Elizabeth and said, apropos of nothing:

"I hate being a quitter."

"Anyhow, we've told everybody we're going," said Mary Elizabeth, with a far-away look in her eyes.

"We might get a telegram—or something," I said hopefully. "Somebody might get sick."

Mary Elizabeth said nothing, but her eyes wandered to my bed, where lay, in order of size, our two revolvers and three rifles.

Now, arranged in New York, it had all seemed simple enough. We would ride into that part of Mexico where rumor said the mountain sheep played about on every crag and peak, and deer came into one's camp at night and carried off the

canned goods. Or perhaps it was a mountain lion that did that. And having killed our sheep and been photographed with him—or them—we would ride out again, becomingly sunburned and with the heads dangling from our saddles, and have them mounted to hang in the billiard room for casual visitors, and such conversation as this:

Visitor: That's a fine head. Where did it come from?

Self (modestly): Mexico.

Visitor (thrilled): Mexico! Who shot him?

Self (without swank): I did. Got him just behind the shoulder. He was three hundred and fifty yards away across the cañon, and going to beat the band." And so on, including details of recovering the body after several hours' climbing. Also producing photograph.

When we reached California, however, things took on a different aspect. There was a sort of hysteria in the air, for this was the time of Villa. We would never come out of Mexico. The most hopeful gentleman we saw said he wouldn't take his wife there for a million dollars. He owned a ranch down there—at least he used to. He wouldn't go down to see if it was still there or not. An old miner, ignoring the bandit question, wrote me how to find water in case he could not dissuade me from going. He had gone in with a party of five and two had died of thirst.

Kindly people we had never met called to protest.

And to help things along the newspapers were filled with scare-heads like this: "Mexicans fire over border at United States soldiers." "Ten Mexicans killed at Yuma." "Ranchers on border arming against Mexican bandits."

Some six days of this left us rather shaken. I remember going into Mary Elizabeth's room one night with a newspaper in my hand, and saying:

"You know I'm willing enough to go myself, but it's a terrible responsibility to take you. Your mother——"

"You're not taking me," said Mary Elizabeth. "I'm going if you are. That's all."

Well, I wasn't going to be called like that, so I simply observed that of course I was going, and went to bed and tried to sleep. But if, at any time, Mary Elizabeth had met me half way—however, it came out all right, so I shall not reproach her. But I stopped reading anything but the war news.

On the last day there came a ray of hope. We could not find a cook. I went on with the lists and packing doggedly, but I observed that going without a cook was impossible. Mary Elizabeth felt as I did. We were going to ride hard and long, and we had no intention of cooking for ourselves, a guide, two American men and seven Mexican soldiers. For our party had been un-

expectedly and variously augmented, and after the following fashion: first the border revenue department decided to send an officer with us, ostensibly to look after us, but partly at least to look over the smuggling situation on the other side of the line. Then the Military Intelligence offered us an interpreter, whose real job it was to size up the pro-Germans below the border, and perhaps to locate the enemy underground to Mexico City, for it was well known that many slackers and draft evaders were being sent out the country in that way.

It will be remembered, too, that this was immediately after the capture of the *Agassiz,* the little German raider, just off the Pacific coast of the Mexican province we were to explore. There were many rumors, that Cantu, the governor, was a German sympathizer, that there was a mysterious wireless in the desert mountains for signaling to German submarines in the Pacific, and so on.

Very possibly Governor Cantu was not ignorant of these additions to our party. For at the last moment he added his own contribution, of two Mexican army officers, three sergeants and two privates!

When we were all gathered together in front of the Quartel, or fortress, of Mexicali, ready to pack the animals, Mary Elizabeth and I took

one look at our young Mexican army, and started for Calexico to buy out the various provision stores.

But still we had no cook!

Rigid sentries with fixed bayonets looked on impassively. The two private soldiers packed diligently, under the direction of their five superior officers. Mules were blind-folded and piled high with our augmented commissariat, including the grapefruit, cases of eggs and strawberry jam, our desert luxuries.

And still no cook!

We took a look at the waiting Mexicans, who looked like an advance guard of Villa's army, and hoped against hope. But at four that afternoon a cook appeared. At least he said he was a cook. He turned out later to be a barber. And the story of that cook is a sad one. He was a bald-headed man, and, I regret to say, slightly intoxicated.

"Well, here's a cook," I observed to Mary Elizabeth with forced gaiety.

"That's fine," said Mary Elizabeth. And sighed.

It was five o'clock when we wound out into the desert, Mary Elizabeth and I leading to keep out of the dust, and a party of dogs escorting us for a mile or so. At five-ten we had lost all civilization, and were embarked on an adventure.

As this is purely a narrative of personal experience, it will suffice to say that our Mexicans served us loyally and well, and that the two American officers were of the very best of a high type. The only complication which arose was when we had reached the German-Mexican coast town of Ensenada, much later on.

Here I regret to say that the American consul telegraphed to the Naval Intelligence department at San Francisco that a suspicious party, headed by a woman named Rinehart, had been in Ensenada and had started up the coast to the border. Upon which a gun boat at once left San Diego to round us up!

Had they only known it, the Rinehart woman would have been extremely glad to see it, about that time.

But to go back to our start. The desert has no irresistible lure for me, but at sunset that evening I paused for a moment from my rapt observation of the horse that was to carry me through aching miles of desert and mountain, to look south and west. There, purple against the desert, still shadowy from the sand-storm that had raged all day, lay the hills that we were to cross. Beyond them lay the dead sea, the Laguna Salada. Beyond that were mountains, and then we knew not what.

We had been able to buy no detail map of the

country. In my New York hotel I had found an atlas of North America, but below the border there was a complete blank, with the one word "desert" written across it. Even the map looked dry.

"Well, we won't be crowded," I had observed to Mary Elizabeth.

But the border officer knew the type of country we were entering very thoroughly, and the Revenue department in Los Angeles had given us a map made by a captured smuggler, and purporting to show the water holes. That it was totally inaccurate does not matter now.

The main thing, of course, was water. If you find the water holes, all is well. If you do not, you die, and your bones join other heaps of bleached bones which lie in the sun and stare with empty sockets at the sky.

Twenty-three years before Tony, our guide, had made the trip. He was sure of water, he said. But Mary Elizabeth and I, conferring apart, considered twenty-three years a considerable period. Personally I can not remember the name of the matinée idol I was in love with twenty-odd years ago—although I do remember that he had a large black mustache.

"Besides," I observed, "it has been a dry winter. There has been no rain. All the water holes may be empty."

I even confided this to Tony. But he laughed.

"Water? You'll have water," he promised. "And palm trees. On the second night you'll sleep under a palm."

We were justly sceptical. Any thing less like a palm-growing country we had never seen. It was even conspicuously lacking in that type of high-growing shrubbery of any sort on which we had counted when deciding not to take a tent. And to add to our anxiety, it was about that time that we discovered there were thirteen people in our party.

We moved on, the saddle string ahead, the pack behind. The mules came on a steady jog, guided by shrill whistles. Spurs and buckles clicked. The setting sun shone on our rifle barrels, on the dark faces of our soldier escort, on our Dutch oven, carefully packed on top of a miscellaneous assortment of boxes and bags. And before stretched that strange and mysterious and lovely country which is western Mexico.

Here and now I must pay a tribute to our Mexican escort. They were cheerful, polite, and tireless. And it is time, I think, that something be said for the Mexican. We have known them only by their bandits, and of all bandits the Mexican renegade is surely the worst. But what of the people themselves? The small farmers? The peons? The peace-loving, gay and hospitable Mexican of the little towns?

There were many days, of course, when we saw no human being outside of our own party. But now and then there came contacts; here would be a man alone, jogging on his horse toward us. A menacing figure, armed, mustached, possibly ear-ringed, reining in his horse in true bandit fashion. Then, when after a time he had penetrated our disguise of breeches, weapons, goggles, and sun-burn, and saw we were women, off would come his enormous hat, his teeth would flash, and he would be off with a sort of magnificent gesture.

Or at night, we would draw up at some lonely and poverty-stricken little rancho, to find the dogs called off and the establishment placed at our disposal.

The average Mexican of the province through which we traveled had little reason to love us and even less to understand us. He had seen our government make threats we had never fulfilled. His rare newspapers, if they came from the City of Mexico, were quite likely to be German controlled. It was quite within his power, had he so desired, to be unfriendly and inhospitable.

Yet we found him both hospitable and courteous. His house was ours. His fare was ours, his corral for our horses. And on that first evening out any lingering fear we might have had

as to our reception south of the border died of a cheerful phonograph and a hot supper.

We had ridden into the sunset. Dusk came, the desert trail a broad white streak which faded into the purple shadow of Signal Mountain. Night came, and a full moon. And at last there were lights and a ranch yard and the barking of dogs. We rode in. Shadowy figures moved about, an incredible number of them. Horses whinnied and the mountain loomed overhead, a high black shadow crowned with silver.

We dismounted at a great grain shed, roofed and walled with Kaffir corn stocks, and some one brought a lantern. Mary Elizabeth and I dismounted rather stiffly and were immediately surrounded by a ring of barking dogs who did not speak English.

Now, among other things, we had heard that Mexican dogs are incredibly ferocious. We therefore retreated to a strategic corner of the barn and, our guides having disappeared in the darkness, sat on a bale of hay and held tight to our quirts. Nothing untoward happened, however, and it was but an hour later that, having been taken to the ranch house, I was sitting in a low chair with the largest animal in the lot sitting on my lap, a position of his choosing rather than mine, while a musically inclined Mexican rancher,

with a large revolver at his hip, was tending a phonograph and playing Italian opera.

They gave us supper there that night, fresh eggs, beans of course, tortillas and coffee. To have offered payment would have been a serious affront. We were their guests. And the ferocious Mexican dogs waited with their heads on our knees for any scraps we might choose to give them.

As I have said, we had elected to carry no tents, through a misapprehension that it never rained in desert country, and so that night we put our bed rolls in the barn yard. To avoid being stepped on by horses we chose a spot between an irrigating ditch and a great mound of loose straw, and thus made our first tactical error.

Not the first either. The first had been made when a young man with ingenuous eyes and a gold tooth sold me a pneumatic mattress, in the City of New York.

Now the soft heart of Mother Earth is exactly as gentle as the heart of a pawn broker, and as warm as a dog's nose. I had tried it; I knew. And once in the wilderness while my devoted family was hunting branches to put between mother and *terra firma* — particularly firma—I had watched a forest ranger going to bed on what looked like a huge hot water bottle without the neck, and I had felt, through sheer

envy, an unholy desire to stick a hat pin in it.

So the first thing on my list had been an air-mattress. This is not an attack on all air-mattresses. There are some, I am told, gentle but firm, *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re,* as old Chesterfield has it.

But this one was not of that sort. It almost defied the human lung to inflate it, and the bicycle pump I had bought for the purpose had been broken in transit.

Picture us, then, in the deep dust of that courtyard. Mary Elizabeth has retired, by the simple expedient of removing her hat and boots, and has crawled into her bed-roll of cotton mattress, blankets and tarpaulin cover. I am sitting in the dust, trying to inflate the limp and lifeless form of my treasured camp-fire companion, which persists in lying as dead as a leaf of lettuce wilted in the sun. And some such conversation as this:

"I'm going to sit up all night. That's all."

"Can't you sleep on the straw stack?" This drowsily from Mary Elizabeth.

"It's full of rats."

It was, at that. So was the entire area revealed by the flash light, rats who watched us with avid curiosity, or sat up like kittens and washed their faces with their paws.

It was, I think, Mary Elizabeth who suggested

mending the pump with adhesive plaster. The chewing gum was my idea. We had brought it against thirst in the desert. So together we sat up in the dark and chewed gum and cut adhesive, and before long the pump had a first-aid dressing and was weakly sending out a trickle of air.

We slept, rats and all, and at four o'clock a heartless individual with a loud voice suggested that we rise and take up our beds and start. The moon was still shining, and I remembered a line in one of my own farces: "I haven't been up this early since the last time I was up this late."

And the next day Tony made good his promise about the palm trees. We found them, at the mouth of a cañon, with a water hole in their midst. But I have a very hazy memory of them. We had traveled forty-five miles that day at a temperature slightly below boiling point, through sand so deep that the horses' movements were nothing but a series of forward lurches. When I got off my animal that night in the shade of the sheltering palm, I simply fell under him and lay there.

Sometime later he left me and went elsewhere. I did not care. I never wanted to see him again.

I have mentioned that one of the by-products of the trip was to be game.

There are mountain sheep in Lower California.

I know this, because a man I knew came to see me before we started, to tell me that some years ago he went far down into the Peninsula and brought out twelve sheep heads on foot. This is not so ambiguous as it sounds. He did not drive the sheep out like cattle to the market. He shot them and cut off their heads, and then packed them out two hundred and fifty miles on foot, because he had been raided by hostile Indians and all his horses and equipment stolen.

He had a bad cold when he came to see me, and he told me his story in a tragic whisper. He said we would get mountain sheep and other things, including tarantulas that leaped like chamois.

But he was wrong; we got neither. We never saw a tarantula, still or jumping, although the second morning out, going down into my bag for court plaster, I drew out a large black spider with a mean eye. Apparently I had surprised the creature, for he made no unfriendly overtures. But when, a moment later, I made a timid descent into my war sack for a missing stocking and happened on a paper of pins, it required some time to convince me that I was not fatally stung.

In some details, however, my hunter with the husky voice was right. Probably in many, of course, but he had made his trip in the early fall,

which is a better time for hunting than for hunters.

There are sheep in Lower California. There were, to be truthful, exactly as many when we left as when we went in.

We were prepared for anything, from an elephant to a German wireless. I myself carried a Winchester thirty-thirty, a Smith and Wesson thirty-eight, and a small combination shotgun-rifle, which became bent in transit and was only useful for shooting around a corner.

In addition I carried considerable ammunition on my person, so much in fact that I warned Mary Elizabeth not to throw a stone playfully at me, or I would blow up.

So much for the hunting angle of the expedition. My greatest success as a shot was with an emptied half-size milk tin. My greatest failure the day I mistook the cook on the side of a cañon for a mountain lion, and missed him.

For nothing became clearer, as time went on, than that whatever his virtues as a barber, he had none whatever as a cook. As our Captain, Lieutenant and three sergeants felt that such work was beneath them, the entire burden fell on Tony and our two Americans, with conspicuous success.

Of the second object of the trip, seeing new country, we had plenty. We saw it, felt it, and

at times ate it. We bore imprints of it on our persons, especially I, for about two in the morning it was the custom of my air mattress to yield up its last breath and let me down on Mexican soil. A bad fall on a mountain trail by Mary Elizabeth's horse had made various deep impressions on her, also, and all in all we had in the first week gained a first-hand knowledge of that territory equaled by few men and no women at all.

For we were, I believe, the first women who had made this trip. We had, before we had finished, slept in the crater of a volcano, fortunately extinct, in a rattlesnake den, in the corn crib of an abandoned ranch, and in the bedroom of a house where we made forcible entry, the owner being away from home.

Of the third purpose of the trip I am not prepared to speak. Whatever pro-German feeling there existed in portions of Mexico during the war, it seldom translated itself into action. The raider *Agassiz* was apparently a purely individual undertaking, a small venture which failed before it began.

But there can be no doubt that the provinces below the border offered sanctuary to the American slacker, and that in numbers.

From the time the draft law was passed rumors went through the country that great num-

bers of slackers were escaping over the border into Mexico. Most of them were headed for Mexico City, according to these reports, but from Baja California the physical difficulties of getting to the city of Mexico were almost impossible. Therefore most of those who had gone over were still in the province at the time of our visit.

We saw some of them, dejected, ashamed and fearful. Shut off in lonely ranches, hanging around the pool rooms of dirty little Mexican towns, consorting with the riff-raff of both countries which always gathers at a border, they were indeed men without a country.

Some of them were of German parentage. All of them were living on remittances from home, or scantily by what they could earn. In one place I found the two sons of a railroad contractor in California. He was not a German. He was simply a coward, and his two craven sons were skulking beyond the border. If these two boys are ever permitted to come back into the country and to live by the freedom they have refused to assist in preserving, then indeed our democracy is but a travesty.

Remittances to these men were going over the border at the time of our visit there. We even knew the names of the banks which were forwarding the money. There was also a well-established method by which slackers and

pro-Germans from the United States were financed at the border and given special instructions as to routes to Mexico City and so on.

But at the best this method of underground escape was precarious. We knew of two such fugitives who had recently died of thirst in the desert, and how many others met this fate we will never know.

And, while Mexico tolerated them, it was with the contemptuous tolerance of a fighting people for a coward. At one mine at the head of the Gulf of California, in the crater of a volcano, some dozen of them had applied for work and had been refused by the American foreman.

That mine itself had to send twenty-five miles for water, and mere existence there must be difficult and unpleasant. Refused there, these boys had to go on, crossing great dry plains of alkali, without so much as cactus to relieve the monotony of death, across desert where they sank ankle deep in sand, and where water holes are forty miles apart. And this is not for miles, but for hundreds of miles.

Men without a country indeed, paying for their fancied security with their lives, or dragging out a hateful existence among alien people who scorned them.

I am still wondering whether we did not stumble on one of the underground stations.

We had traveled through desert and heat some forty miles that day. At noon we had stopped for luncheon, to find that the lunch mule carried a choice assortment of tin pans, kettles, a hatchet, a lantern and the Dutch oven; nothing else.

We had been following the Laguna Salada all day, and we felt as dead and lifeless as that most moribund of all salt and alkali lakes. Across it, through the heat haze, rose the Cecopa mountains. To our right, seeming to rise within a few hundred yards, but actually three or four miles away, was the Picacho range, which we were later to cross. The going was heavy and slow, through deep sand. In a sort of chorus we chanted:

"The Walrus and the Carpenter were walking hand in hand,
They wept like anything to see such quantities of sand.
'If this were only cleared away,' they said, 'it would be grand!'
'If twenty maids with twenty mops swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose,' the Walrus said, 'that they could get it clear?'
'I doubt it,' said the Carpenter. And shed a bitter tear."

So the Laguna Salada lay breathless and moribund on our left and the mountains towered in the heat haze on our right. And the pack mules fell behind. And I took to riding with a leg over my horse's neck to ease the intolerable ache from my saddle, which I had named the Great Divide.

Late in the afternoon we climbed over a barricade of rocks, to find the mountains beside us and a deep cañon opening up. Cliffs a mile high rose out of the sand, and were broken by the great cleft. Up into that gash we turned our horses, greatly cheered by the sound of running water.

It was there that we discovered our bandit, or whatever he was, across the cañon, and far below us. He had built a little hut for himself, and alas for that instinct in me which forces me to tell the truth, when I first saw him he was mending a sock.

He had been there for some time and he was provisioned for a lengthy stay. Our outfit knew him as a notorious smuggler. He was an ugly little Mexican with an evil face, and he was neither near the coast nor the border. A half-breed Indian was with him.

He said he was there to take the baths, and perhaps he was. But I should like to feel more certain than I do that it was rheumatism, or Chinese or the smuggling of opium that kept him there, and not something uglier.

It was in this cañon that Tony had promised us a hot bath. We had been sceptical, but he was as good as his word. Here and there were oozing springs of hot and sulphurous water,

offering a surcease to saddle soreness and sun-blistered skins.

But there are certain difficulties when two women are traveling tent-less with eleven men, and one of them developed when it was found that the only spring not too hot to get into occupied a hole about the size of a bath-tub in the center of the only level place for a camp. Sometime along with the article entitled "Wild game I have missed" I shall write one entitled "Baths I have taken."

Mary Elizabeth and I took a survey of the ground, and at last I went to Tony.

"Can't you take some blankets," I suggested, "and rig up a shelter about that hole in the ground?"

"Why don't you bathe at night?"

"There's a full moon. And anyhow it's bad enough to get into a foot of ooze in daylight, when one can see what's crawling about."

"Nothing crawls in a hot spring," said Tony. But he gathered some blankets, and from behind our boulders we could hear stakes being driven. It all sounded cheerful and promising.

We drew for the first bath, and Mary Elizabeth won. So I waited, occupying my spare time in removing hairpins and a package of chewing gum from my cold cream, and at last Mary Elizabeth came back.

"My *dear!*" she said. "Have you seen it?"

Well, *it* was the blanket protection. And it was three feet in height and very unsteady in the wind.

"How did you manage?" I inquired with interest.

She told me, and I followed her procedure, which was, while still in the bath, to dry and clothe the upper part of one's body. Then, standing up to complete one's toilet as far as was practicable, and at last to crawl out of the pool and put on one's shoes and stockings. I tried it and it worked very well.

Life had settled down by that time into a regular routine. We rode all day, scanning the mountain peaks for sheep and German wireless; waited at noon for the cook to bring on the lunch mule and finally gave him up and went on, lunchless; talked of the things we would like to have to drink if we could have anything to drink; and at night found some heavenly oasis which had lingered in Tony's mind for twenty-three years, like my early hero's mustache, and slid gingerly from our horses.

Our evening program ran something like this:

(a) Reach the camping place and after considerable effort bring our knees to normal propinquity. (b) Find some cactus or mesquite to use

as a bedroom and boudoir. (c) Insist that the cook should not boil the coffee before he begins to peel the potatoes. (d) Frantic search for the sunburn lotion. (e) Put a pillow on a flat rock and sit on it. (f) Gently observe to any one of the eleven men that we were dying of thirst and where is the spring? (g) Eat largely of bacon, potatoes, beans, bread, jam, olives, canned peaches and coffee. (h) Follow our bed rolls and duffle bags to the boudoir, and suggest that if any one has time a pail of water would be useful. (i) Mad search for canvas basin, soap, towels and a soothing ointment. (j) Stretching a rope to keep the horses from tramping on us. (k) General survey of the landscape from a strategic viewpoint. (l) Decisions as to which one shall bathe first, while the other keeps off accidental intrusion. (m) False alarm, accompanied by the precipitate retreat of the bathing one into the cactus thicket. (n) Search for the tweezers to pull out the cactus barbs. (o) The final rite of chewing gum and cutting adhesive preparatory to mending the pump and blowing up my mattress for the night.

It rained while we were at the hot springs. We had placed our bed rolls inside a circle of boulders lined with cactus, as usual, and had gone through the evening program of chewing gum

and blowing up the air-mattress. It was a heavenly night with the stars curiously close, as they so often are in the south. We lay there, I remember, side by side, and Mary Elizabeth had her flash light and a map of the heavens. We had just found Cassiopeia when a large drop of rain struck me on the right eye.

We were doubly outraged.

In the first place, there was not a cloud in the sky. In the second, why a desert if it rained? Is not the *raison d'être* for a desert that it does not rain?

However, it rained. It began gently, but it got down to work soon enough, accompanied by a cold and howling wind. One could hear the wind coming. It struck the crags above with a scream, shrieked down among the boulders, and hit us like an incoming ocean breaker a mile high. Soon our boudoir was a lake with two islands in the center, said islands being Mary Elizabeth and myself. At each onslaught of the gale some treasured and intimate article of wearing apparel took wings and departed into the night.

We drew our rain flaps over our heads, and pools collected in them and poured at every movement into our sleeping bags. At two in the morning we heard a crash, and knew that the palm leaf hut which had sheltered our guns and cameras had fallen.

We saw a light soon after that, and plodding through the pool came the two American officers, dragging a huge tarpaulin. They covered us with it, heads and all, and anchored it down with stones. But a tarp is just as air tight as a cement sidewalk, and we were compelled to emerge now and then for air like whales coming up to blow.

On one such occasion we met.

"And they call this the desert!" said Mary Elizabeth.

"Of course it's the desert," I said bitterly. "Didn't we travel endless miles to-day to find water?"

"Well, we've found it," said Mary Elizabeth, and submerged again.

At dawn we sat up and looked around. We lay in a lake and the murmur of the little stream had become the roar of a river. All around, clinging desperately to the cactus, were our garments, dripping disconsolately.

It rained for thirty-six hours.

On the day that it cleared we climbed the mountain wall. More than a mile we struggled into the air, with always behind us that vast dead flat of salt lake desert, and the Gulf of California. Up slippery boulders the horses climbed, struggling frantically for a foothold. And on one such boulder Mary Elizabeth's horse fell. There

was a wild scraping of iron shoes, a yell from the man behind her, and a thud.

It might have been very terrible. As it was, she emerged considerably shocked, very calm and with a number of bruises whose progress from blue to purple, and finally to a lemon yellow, she watched with reminiscent eyes for many a day.

"Deer country now," called Tony over his shoulder when we reached the top.

And deer country it should have been. For although we still traveled in sand, there were piñon trees now, and here and there small meadows in which I am sure, were I a deer, I should have chosen to browse. But perhaps Mexican deer have no æsthetic tastes. For all its beauty, that mountain plateau was apparently as empty as the desert.

It was at the very top of the climb, when behind and far below us lay the Laguna Salada and to the south the head of the Gulf, that we happened on the grave. It lay in the sunlight only a foot or two from the trail, and was marked by a small wooden cross, crudely whittled with a knife. In lead pencil was written on it the word "Dick." Somebody had died there, on that steep and hazardous trail. Died and been buried in a shallow grave. We shall never know that story. Did he die of thirst, with water only a few miles away? Had he missed, not so very far away, that

circle of flat stones by which the desert traveler knows of the buried spring in the center? Had he taken ill and struggling toward help, passed out there on the bare mountain-side? Had he fallen? Had his horse slipped? Who is to know!

It was after we had moved on that one of the men in the party repeated a poem. All over the world I have found men who, followers of the open road, lovers of the trail, carry their books in their hearts. Always they love poetry, but it is seldom they repeat it. Perhaps it was that lonely grave. Perhaps it was the trail itself, stretching always on and up. But that day he repeated this, and I took it down in my note book. It voices the unspoken prayer of so many followers of the open road and lovers of the waste and empty places.

I thank you, Lord, that I am placed so well,
That you have made my freedom so complete,
That I'm no slave to whistle, clock or bell,
Or dim-eyed prisoner of wall or street.

Just let me live my life as I've begun,
And give me work that's open to the sky.
Make me a partner of the wind and sun,
And I won't ask a life that's soft or high.

Make me as big and open as the plains,
As honest as the horse between my knees;
Clean as the wind that blows behind the rains,
Free as the hawk that circles down the breeze.

Let me be easy on the man that's down,
And make me square and generous with all.
I'm careless sometimes, Lord, when I'm in town,
But never let them say I'm mean or small.

Forgive me sometimes, Lord, when I forget,
You understand the reasons that are hid.
You know the many things that gall and fret,
You know me better than my mother did.

Just keep an eye on all that's done and said
And right me sometimes when I turn aside.
And guide me on the long, dim trail ahead
That reaches upward toward the Great Divide.

With every mile that day the trees grew larger. We found a small creek, and Tony prophesied a lake. We were dubious. But after three miles through a great wood, there was the gleam of water ahead. There was a lake, perhaps two miles long. It was covered with black specks.

"Ducks!" cried the man who had brought a shotgun. "Millions of ducks!"

There were perhaps five thousand. There may have been ten. There was no hesitation in the speech I made immediately.

"We are going to stop here," I said. "I have never in my life had enough wild duck. Now I intend to have it."

That lake was a sort of duck heaven. There were canvas backs, teal, mallard, redheads, butter balls,—I do not remember them all now. And they were placid with the placidity of plenty

to eat and fearless with the fearlessness that has never heard a gun. Frightened away from one end of the lake, they would merely migrate to the other, flying low in dense clouds. And as those of us without shotguns took to potting at them with rifles, I fancy they lost considerable weight while we camped there.

Tony cooked them, putting them in the Dutch oven and placing them in a heated hole in the ground. On the top of the oven he placed red-hot wood embers, and then filled up the hole with earth. In this fireless cooker they roasted over night, and in the morning they were such a breakfast as even a woman afraid of her weight and accustomed only to coffee in the mornings could not resist.

Tony, as a matter of fact, was doing practically all the cooking by that time.

The cook was a bald-headed man, with an unctuous smile and a clinging disposition. He was, indeed, like Tony's hole in the ground, a fireless cooker. For when the truth came out that he was a barber and not a cook at all, and we tried at Ensenada to get rid of him, he refused to leave us. I have quite a pathetic snapshot of him, holding desperately to his horse's bridle and threatening to jail us all if we left him behind.

It was then that I turned on my party bitterly.

"If you had only let me shoot him when I had

a chance," I reminded them, "we might be out of this mess."

I have, I think, mentioned the fact that my greatest failure as a shot had been the day I mistook him for a mountain lion, and missed him. For some reason or other the party had objected to my trying again.

We left him, finally, at Ensenada, paying him for the rest of the time to get rid of him. Our last view of him was of the morning sun gleaming on his bald head, his eyes wistfully following us. I do not know why he loved us so.

We missed him, rather. When night came, and we were in camp, it had been something to look forward to, that appearance of the cook two hours behind the rest and supper safely over. He always walked, leading his horse. We had thought that this was his simple and primitive method of getting out of the cooking, but Tony told us later that some of our men had told him that his horse was a killer, and had thrown and trampled on every cook he had ever carried.

All in all, he had tramped more than two hundred miles when we left him, and the gentle convexity of figure with which he had started had turned the other direction, and had apparently only been stopped by his spine.

It was not until several days of hard going that we realized that all the wealth of Baja

California does not lie in the southern continuation of the Imperial Valley. We reached, at that time, those vast grazing uplands which will some time spell wealth for the province. For more than a hundred miles back from the Pacific the country we traveled over is a cattle man's Paradise. And it is practically empty. True, an English company had a ranch a hundred miles across, and had thousands of cattle on it. But that year it would hardly pay the interest on the investment.

The reason was that there was a prohibitive duty on exported cattle and horses.

The plain truth is that to support troops and secure funds, the practise of selling concessions to export has wrought havoc with the land owner or cattle raiser below the border. There is no inducement to invest money under these conditions, just as there is none to buy land.

For instance, at a time of world food shortage, concessionaires bought exclusive rights to export beans. These concessionaires then bought the beans at their own prices, too low to encourage growing, and sold them in the United States at an immense profit. Rather than sell out at a loss, many growers let their beans that year rot in the storage houses. On one ranch on the Pacific which I saw hundreds of tons of beans were thus

lost. And this was in a time of world-wide scarcity of food.

After the sixth day our horses and mules began to cause us considerable concern. They had had good grazing only once, and that was at the hot spring. And we carried no oats. Feed for twenty animals would have been difficult to transport, but early in the trip I was wishing I had insisted on oats. It is, of course, the theory of the average packer that his string can live off the country, but only too often, as in this case, the living is a bare existence and hardly that.

Before we reached the hot spring our animals had looked gaunt and weary; the mules particularly had drooped. But when we left there they were in good condition again. Three days, however, of climbing and trail work and no grass had left them low in strength and me low in my mind.

At the top of the range, however, we found a log house, with a Chinaman and a Mexican in charge, and asked for oats. They had none, but they had corn.

The next day my horse behaved peculiarly. He lunged forward with every step, so that it was singularly like riding a camel. Several other horses showed a tendency to lie down, riders and all, in the trail and not get up.

Finally three horses lay down and did not rise again.

It was not a pleasant situation. We were not near water, and our supply of food was limited. We could have unpacked our mules and used them; indeed, the border officer had been changing to an easy gaited mule now and then for a rest. But it meant considerable complication.

In the end Tony decided to bleed the horses. Mary Elizabeth and I went around a corner of the trail until he had finished, and reflected on various things, including the insane obstinacy of two women accustomed to three meals a day and water on tap out of a faucet, and yet voluntarily hunting trouble like this.

The next day the horses were all right, and we went on.

It is possible that, in stressing our troubles, I have not sufficiently emphasized our compensations.

There were quail everywhere. We had found them, plump and sweet, in the desert, so far from water that one would expect them to be as dry as the sand itself. It is still a mystery to me. Coyotes and deer can range far for water, but these birds, moving always on the ground with that swift walk that is yet so stealthy were often miles from any spring. In the mountains were mountain quail, larger and with tall crests.

One of the commonest sights of the trip was to see the outfit halted while Mary Elizabeth and I, dropping painfully from our horses, would wander gun in hand through thorny thickets which a moment before had been alive with birds. The moment we entered it became a dead thicket. We plunged through sand, impaled ourselves on thorns, fired at shadows, and narrowly escaped killing each other. I have sat in such a thicket endeavoring to resemble a quail for hours on end, without results. And when at last I got up in disgust, from all around my hiding place impudent birds have piped a jeering farewell to me.

My horse was gun shy. The border officer, that member of the party who could shoot with a revolver a jack rabbit running—and a jack rabbit running is the shooting star of the desert—that gentleman nearly unseated me more than once.

But I had my revenge. That it was purely accidental he will only know if he reads these lines.

Target shooting was our one recreation. Mary Elizabeth, who was new to the way of guns, took lessons in sighting and firing, and developed into a shot of some pretensions, and the jack-rabbit gentleman threw things into the air and perforated them with nonchalance. Then, one day, he put a half-sized condensed milk can on a rock some distance away and missed it.

I am afraid I laughed. Thereupon he wheeled and held out his forty-five to me.

"Here," he said. "You try it!"

It was as heavy as a base-burner stove and as unwieldy. When I held it out it described great arcs, and the Mexican soldiers showed an impulse to get behind the palm trees. Beyond its shiny tip I could see the milk can, first on one side and then on the other. With a last despairing effort I brought the sight onto the can and pulled. The milk can sailed into the air and disappeared.

I never tried again. I simply observed that while naturally handy with a gun, I did not care for revolver shooting. It had no *finesse*. But from that time on I observed in the Mexican soldiers a respect added to their deference that was highly gratifying.

It was, of course, too early in the year to see certain forms of desert life. There were few insects, although after we had come out of the desert into civilization again, one evening when I was dressing I found a Mexican centipede crawling coyly over the garment I was putting on. It rather pained me to think of how long I must have been carrying that poor creature with me, tucked away in a pocket perhaps, or in the toe of a riding boot.

Of the snakes we only found two, both rattlers, and those on the Pacific coast. But the memory

of my friend of the husky voice was still with me, and at night conversations such as this were not infrequent.

I: "Are you awake, Mary Elizabeth?"

No reply.

I (louder): "Are you awake, Mary Elizabeth?"

M. E. (sitting up in her bed-roll suddenly and still half asleep): "What is it?"

I: "Do you smell anything queer?"

M. E. (lies down again and yawns): "No. I've got a cold. Is it a skunk?"

I: "Snakes, I think."

M. E. (sliding down completely inside her bed-roll and speaking in a smothered tone): "Good heavens! Do snakes smell?"

I (feeling for the flash and encountering something cold and clammy, from which I recoil violently. It turns out to be a tube of cold cream): "I've heard that they do. It's coming from the ground. I think I'm over a snake hole."

M. E.: "Well, it can't bite you through an air-mattress."

I: "The air's all out. I'm flat on the ground."

M. E. (raising herself on her elbow): "I *do* smell something!"

A silence during which I am searching for my bedroom slippers. I fail to find them and finally put two bare feet on the ground. I immediately step into a cactus, and sit down on the bed-roll,

groaning. Mary Elizabeth has the rudeness to laugh. After a gloomy silence in which I inspect my feet, I get up and drag my bed away, revealing a small hole in the ground. I focus the flash light on it.

I: "There it is!"

M. E. (not laughing now): "You'd better cover it with something."

In the end we cover it with heavy stones, and nervously retire. In the morning it reveals itself six inches deep, and empty.

One night, however, we were not mistaken. As it was raining heavily at the time, however, I simply left my bed-roll over the hole, and probably saved a family of rattlesnakes from extinction.

On the whole, we heard more animal life than we saw. Our camps at the water holes kept the desert animals from them, and coyotes and mountain lions were apt to register a noisy protest in the night. Near the coast small foxes barked, also, but did not live up to Tony's story of their biting the feet of sleeping travelers.

Perhaps the worst fright we had was when, sleeping in the aforementioned corn-crib of a deserted *rancho,* a corn-crib with slats for sides and no roof, an animal prowled for hours around outside, groaning. We had never heard a mountain lion groan, but we were quite sure that it

could. As the corn-crib was a mere shell, we slept very little, until toward dawn the creature brayed. It was a wild burro. Why its attentions to us I do not understand. Loneliness, perhaps. Bill Nye once wrote an ode to the mule, something like this:

"Thou lonely, sad and unobtrusive mule.
Thou standeth idly 'gainst the azure sky
And sweetly, sadly singeth
Like a hired man.
Who taught thee thus to warble?"

Came a day when, like Balboa in the rhetoric books, we were to discover the Pacific Ocean climbing to the top of a mountain. We had climbed the coast range, and from ten o'clock that morning we had watched for the gleam of the Pacific. Hours went by. It began to appear as though it had been mislaid somewhere.

"Perhaps we've passed it," somebody suggested.

It was a bright hot day, and a high wind brought up dust and sand in little clouds about us. We were thirsty too, but then we were always thirsty. And at last the ocean stretched in front of us, far below, and it looked cool and very, very wet. We began that fruitless and misery-engendering pastime of the desert traveler, planning what we would have to drink if we could have anything. I wanted water. I wanted to sit

in a bathtub full of it, with a glass full of it in my hand. Mary Elizabeth wanted orangeade with plenty of ice. And then somebody mentioned cold beer, and there was a hopeless silence.

Late that day we descended the mountain slope and reached our first town, Ensenada, a little settlement on the ocean. We created considerable excitement when dirt-covered, tanned and extremely weary, we rode through its dusty streets. Children followed us. People came to the doors to watch us go by. We made an imposing procession with our twenty animals, although our mules carried lighter burdens than when we started. There had been no such excitement in the town, some one said, since months before when a tractor pulling eight wagons had gone through.

A little town, Ensenada, with wide unshaded streets, it lies on one of the few harbors of the Pacific. With a comparatively small expenditure, the harbor could be made a very fine one, I am informed.

We had been told that the town was a German stronghold in this part of Mexico. I do not know. We found it very friendly, and it immediately granted our first request. Our Mexican officers made it, and it was this: that our three soldiers and two privates be allowed that evening of freedom, and then be imprisoned in

the Quartel for the remaining time until we started again, so they might sober up!

This was on a Saturday, and on Sunday evening the town gave us a ball at the town hall.

The question of the ball was one for great debate. Could two American women, possessing only the riding clothes they stood up in, attend a dance? Echo answered no. Mary Elizabeth had brought a divided skirt, but I had not reckoned balls in our itinerary, and the vision of myself, at the scaling period of a bad sunburn, and in riding breeches, facing a receiving line, daunted me. We went finally, and Mary Elizabeth danced in her riding boots. But I sat the entire evening, conscious of certain deficiencies in my riding garments, due to much contact with a saddle.

Sat, that is, after the preliminary formality, which is the custom, of the guest of honor on the arm of the mayor making two formal processional rounds of the ball room. Sat, too, until very, very late. Unlike our Washington method of letting the guest of honor go first, so the rest can talk about him or her afterwards, the Mexicans keep the honor guest to the end.

Curiously enough, there were some American slackers at that ball, and dreary enough exiles they looked to be. The stage road was closed when we were there, owing to washed-out bridges. The newspapers were two weeks old.

There had been no mail for many days. And those I saw had dreary and hopeless faces, a shuffling walk and a hang-dog look.

One of them came up to one of the American officers outside the town hall that night. For some reason he suspected our errand, for this is one of the penalties these boys pay. They go through life looking over their shoulders. He slouched up to the American and looked him over. Then:

"I've just got this to say," he said defiantly. "I'll shoot anybody who comes here after me."

The American looked at him contemptuously.

"Well, I've got this to say," he observed. "We don't want you. We're glad to get rid of your sort. But don't forget this: If we ever do want you, which God forbid, we'll come and get you."

The town serenaded us that night after the dance. We had just got into bed when the first strains of La Poloma struck up.

"What in the world ought we to do?" I inquired from my cot. We had drawn lots for the bed, and Mary Elizabeth had got it.

"One of us ought to go down, I suppose." She lay back and yawned. "You go. It's you they're serenading."

"You've got a skirt," I protested. "It's easier to get into than riding clothes."

Mary Elizabeth yawned luxuriously.

"Nothing in the world would make me get up," she observed. "Perhaps you ought to ask them in and give them something to eat, or to drink——" Her voice trailed off.

In the end neither of us moved. We learned later that we should have shown a light in the window, but as under the circumstances we should have shown considerably more than a light perhaps it is well we did not know.

The band played for hours and hours, waiting for the light which never came, and then got up bright and early the next morning and played us out of town. It was that morning when, having locked our army up so it would be sober for the start, the kindly chief of the garrison came to see us off, and brought with him and presented us, army and all, each with a quart bottle of mescal whisky. Of which, as the border officer said, if you got drunk on it on Sunday, every time you took a drink of water the following week you got drunk all over again.

Some two or three hours later, riding up the beautiful Pacific headlands, the sea below us on the left, we looked back to see as demoralized a pack outfit as I have ever laid eyes on. The army was reeling in its saddles; the mules were off the trail in every direction, and more than one pack was under the animal's stomach.

Tony was helpless. We went on. Some eight

hours after we had selected our camping site that evening, the pack blew in. They were a subdued and chastened lot, and if any untoward effect followed their drinks of water the rest of the week we did not notice it.

From Ensenada to San Diego is about a hundred miles north. We chose to go by the coast, partly because of the only promise Tony made which he did not fulfill. This was that once in her life Mary Elizabeth should have enough lobsters. He also drew a thrilling picture of our sitting on rocks in the Pacific, and bringing in more fish than we could carry. To this end I had searched Ensenada for fishing hooks and lines. The hooks were intended for anything over ten pounds. Considering the size of the ocean, it seemed unlikely anything smaller would come out of it.

The fishing story is rather a painful one.

Now the time to fish in the ocean is at the turn of the tide. By galloping some ten miles along the beach we beat the tide, although it was touch and go. Now and then, rounding a rocky point, we had to wait for the interval between breakers. Our desert horses had never seen the sea, and mine showed a wild inclination, at each incoming wave, to climb the cliff. But at last Tony hauled up his weary horse and said the time had come to camp and fish.

Also, if we were to eat that night, we must have fish. For the pack was far behind us.

We had no bait but clams, which refused to remain on the hooks. The tide was coming in, washing over us ever and anon. I slipped on a mossy rock and sat down in a pool. The sun went down and it grew cold. But pride kept us there. Up above on a cliff was Tony with a fire, waiting for something to cook. In front was the Pacific, full of edible fish. But there was nothing to connect the two. It was then that our Mexican lieutenant waded in to his waist, made a desperate cast and brought up a blue devil. In the twilight it looked a thing of horror, but it was a fish. In triumph we carried it back, but the lieutenant ate no supper that night. Nor did I.

Somewhere, out in the Pacific that night, was a gun boat looking for us. Somewhere, back along the trail, was our pack outfit, heading unsteadily for us. But somewhere to the north was a wire fence, and a little customs house set in a desert field, and beyond that was home.

Mary Elizabeth and I sat on a headland that evening and stared north.

Three days later a close observer at Tia Juana, which was then a dead-alive little Mexican hamlet, might have seen a curious mounted procession emerge from a cavern and wend its way toward the river and the broken down bridge. It was

headed by two women, burned a deep tomato red, and much torn as to garments, which garments being considerably looser than they had been a month before.

Behind came two American officers in mufti, said mufti being in an extreme case of disrepair. Behind them were two Mexican officers in what had once been uniforms, and behind them again three sergeants and two privates of the Mexican Army, rifles, bandoliers, knives and so on. Interspersed were seven mules, one of which immediately took to the river, pack and all, and had to be roped out.

The gun boat had just reached Ensenada!

* * * * * * *

Exactly three hours later two women entered the dining-room of the Coronado Beach Hotel. They were in evening dress, and carefully marcelled. They took only a casual glance at the *menu,* and then said to the waiter: "Bring it in!"

They looked exactly like all the other women at the hotel, but with this difference. From the neck up they were burned a dark magenta, verging on the purple, and they seemed fascinated by the ice in their drinking water.

Every now and then one of them would hold up her glass, and begin: "Do you remember——?"

And the other would nod her head. She did.

SEVEN: A House-Boat on the Keys

SEVEN

A HOUSE-BOAT ON THE KEYS

SOMETIME, into the life of every man and occasional woman, comes the longing to own a boat and sail the broad seas o'er; to pace his own quarter-deck, or whatever it is that the owner paces; to stand, a hand shading his sun-wrinkled eyes, and scan his own horizon; to discover for himself new places; to re-dream his boyhood dreams of piracy; and—the golden days of piracy being over—to descend like Captain Kidd on the various fishes which are now his only legitimate prey.

It is true that there are yachtsmen who do not fish. Who feel no sense of shame when the steward goes ashore and barters for a salmon or a kingfish. Who regard the sea generally as something to float on, and not as what it is, the mysterious hiding-place and battle-ground of the most horrible and most beautiful of created creatures.

I have explained that I believe in sea serpents. I believe in anything in the sea. On a recent fishing trip this subconscious conviction of mine gave birth to a dream that I had landed a mer-

maid, no longer young, whose hair was bleached and who told me she originally came from Cincinnati. I told this dream to Joe, of whom more hereafter, and Joe was delighted.

"Pretty?" he asked.

"Not very, Joe."

"Young?"

"About my age."

"Oh, gee!" said Joe disgustedly, and went on cracking the shell of a hermit crab.

Probably the most beautiful and the strangest sea creatures are to be found in tropical waters. One winter we went up the Chagres River on a yacht and anchored a mile or so below the great spillway from Gatun Lake. Literally thousands of tarpon milled there, and I have a vivid memory of a member of my family chasing a giant lizard, an iguana, up a bank, getting it by the tail, and having the tail come off in his hands. Whether the iguana did this voluntarily or not, I do not know. So many sea creatures can apparently dismember themselves at will.

Not to get too quickly to our house-boat on the Keys, that Chagres trip was unusual in many ways. The heat was terrific below at night, so we put canvas cots on deck and slept in a mixed row of both sexes. I am thus able to state that one of the well-known sportsmen of this country, Mr. Rex Beach, is a quiet sleeper, and that par-

rots are not. That the best bait I found for tarpon was a piece of red flannel from the aforementioned Mr. Beach's fishing chest, and that it bore every evidence of having once been a part of that gentleman's lingerie. That snakes do hang from trees in the tropics; that taking a pet iguana out for a swim on the end of a string is harder than taking a dog for a walk; and that shooting alligators at night from a leaking canoe, when one has been requested to sit over the hole in the boat, is one of the dampest sedentary occupations in my experience.

But about this matter of house-boats!

There is, as I have said, a strange lure about fishing in tropical waters, a mystery, an almost horrible fascination, because of the strange things that dwell there—great, snake-like creatures weaving their deadly heads back and forth, staring up with small, venomous eyes; creatures with stinging tails, with poison fins, with long, carnivorous teeth. And among them, saved from extinction either by speed or extreme fecundity, fish of such extreme beauty, such colorings and flashings and symmetry, as no northern waters can produce.

And in the quiet shallows around the Florida Keys, or islands, clearly outlined to the watcher against the white coral sand and marl of the bottom, the battle goes on eternally. Again and

again I have hooked fish or seen fish hooked, only to watch the deadly onrush of some wolf of the sea, cutting them in half before they reached the boat. Sitting in some dream paradise of sunny pool with fish playing close beside me, I have watched a shark or barracuda sweep in, taking toll of anything less swift than they.

Nor is this slaughter from the sea only. Perched in trees, standing on banks, flying low over the turquoise-blue water, are predatory birds, blue and white herons, pelicans—those birds whose anatomical peculiarities have been immortalized in verse—hawks, gulls. Relentless and voracious, fishing for themselves or for their young, they take daily and hourly toll of the deep.

Last of all the predatory creatures comes man, throws out his cunning lures, and in the name of necessity or sport further depopulates the sea.

Were it not for that fecundity which caused the suggestion, in the "Cruise of the Kawa," of crossing the shad with the domestic hen, the sea would speedily become merely something to float on or bathe in.

And indeed some species are already becoming extinct. Even laws do not prevent it. The great sea-cow, or manatee, found nowhere else in the world but near the mouth of the Miami River, is rapidly passing, in spite of a fine of five hundred

dollars for killing one. There is a subterranean traffic in its meat. The crawfish, that great lobster-like creature with whips or horns that run to two feet in length, has found his way to northern tables, and the market fisherman has ravaged his dwelling-place in the mud. Where three years ago were thousands, to-day there is not one.

On the great game fishes of the deeper waters outside the Keys, the year's take can make but small impression. But even to an ardent fisherman there is something pathetic about the huge bodies spread on docks in the blistering sun, to-day's admiration and to-morrow's offense, mute and rotting tributes to man's vanity and desire for conquest.

But about the house-boat!

I myself know little about boats. No matter how firmly I fix them, starboard and port are always inextricably confused. My idea of boxing a compass would be to put it into something. The only sailboat I ever helped to manipulate was a canoe, with one of the best bed sheets on it for a sail, and an early experience with marine engines in a launch was that one cranked them until a profuse perspiration developed, and then was towed home. I took my first long voyage on my wedding trip, and the marriage was nearly broken up by the ability of the other party to the contract to eat an orange in the early morning.

Yet, by a singular fatality, a certain part of my later life has been passed in boats, ranging from ocean liners down to that type of canoe which is made of canvas, folds up on a horse's back, has, if any seat at all, the sort one hangs in the guest-room bathtub, and is automatically self-emptying.

By a process of elimination, therefore, I have come down to two sorts of boats—the largest possible liners, and the house-boat. And since even house-boats have their differences, to one sort of house-boat. There are house-boats like the ones on the Thames, which specialize in flower-boxes, awnings, and punts, whatever a punt may be. And there are house-boats that tie up somewhere, say in Lake Worth or Miami Harbor, and serve tea or the prohibition substitute for tea. And there are house-boats that cruise along the Florida Keys and don't fish. And there are house-boats that both cruise and fish. It is this last type, and the life lived on them, which we are slowly approaching.

Now that the Presidents and Cabinets go house-boating the moment they can get rid of Congress, and national affairs are being discussed between bites, so to speak, there is an enormous interest in house-boat life. Does, for instance, the Chief Executive, whose quarters on the *Mayflower* are most luxurious—have I not slept in his bed!—go roughing it in Florida? Are

the Presidential garments hung on hooks or stowed under a bunk? Does he have to wait in line for his bath or have one of his own?

Can we pierce this veil of mystery?

I once knew a British naval officer whose sole claim to fame was that he had seen the King of England without any clothes on. He was only a prince, then, it is true. The ship had gone into harbor somewhere, and the officer went to the prince's cabin with a message. When he received no answer to his knock, he opened the door, and there was the royal gentleman, with his head out a porthole, and otherwise clad only in a battleship, surveying the scene.

A house-boat is literally a floating house. A well-regulated one has private baths, beds, windows instead of ports, and curtains at those windows, a rail which remains parallel to the horizon, a terrific speed of about ten miles an hour, and an appetite for gasoline which makes an army truck ashamed of itself.

"How many miles do you get to the gallon?" I asked the Captain on a recent cruise, conversationally.

"Well," he said, "we figure to use about twenty gallons to the mile."

I had been doing a little furtive calculation as to buying a small house-boat of my own, but I immediately went below—one goes below on a

house-boat, not downstairs—and tore up my estimates.

The way to enjoy a house-boat is to be a visitor on one. It costs rather less to run than an orphan asylum, but with this difference, that a good orphan asylum works all year, and the house-boat does not. Add to the ten or more men required to run a fair-sized boat the owner, his family, and his guests; feed them, ice them, gasoline them; feed, ice, gasoline, and uniform the crew; repair, insure, store, and license the outfit, and it will be perceived at once that the proper way to enjoy a house-boat is as a guest.

After several experiences, I have observed that while the visitors are playing bridge or fishing, the owner is mostly at his desk, writing out checks.

To understand the house-boat life in Florida it is necessary to understand the conditions which make it possible. For these great boats, with their shallow draft of only four to five feet, can cruise only in quiet seas. There must be literally thousands of square miles of such seas among the Florida Keys, protected by shoals, reefs, and low islands. The tide hardly affects them; the surf never reaches them. A steady wind may blow the water out until the narrow channels themselves are not negotiable, and one of the most frequent incidents of house-boating is to be neatly

settled into the mud on the bottom until the tide beats the wind and reasserts itself.

To count on fishing at the turn of the tide, which is the fisherman's zero hour, is a mistake. The tide sometimes runs out or in through some of the "creeks" between the islands for thirty-six hours at a time. . . .

The house-boat has been brought out of its summer quarters. It is gleaming with fresh, white paint. Its engines, propelling and pumping, and its dynamos for electric lighting, are in order. The brass work, on deck and in the engine room, gleams with polishing. The galley, with its white-clothed chef and messman, is immaculate. Deck chairs and awnings are set up. The fish guide has gone over the tackle, and the launch man over his launches and small boats. The charts are on the chart table—not that the captain ever looks at them, but because the dummy hand at bridge has a habit of wandering forward to ask where the boat is.

Ice, coal for the galley, food, and water have been stored. The grocer's delivery launch has tossed its last package aboard. The boat is ready to leave.

All around, in the harbor, are similar boats; the bay is crowded with launches on messenger service. Hydroplanes fly across the surface with a deafening roar, gain momentum, and hop off,

carrying more or less nervous passengers. Or swoop down from the sky and light on the surface like huge, ungainly birds. The scene is as busy as a city street.

With a great creaking of chains and gear the anchor is hoisted, and a gentle throbbing is felt throughout the boat. Lizzie, the propeller engine, has gone to work.

Quite unexpectedly, in an hour or two, civilization is gone. Gone is Miami, with the great, glass dome of the Flamingo Hotel, which is illuminated in turn red, white, and blue at night. Gone is the bathing beach, with its sun-umbrellas and its unexpected revelations of the human figure; gone is the park, with its horseshoe pitchers or throwers, or whatever it is one does with them; gone is Carl Fisher's elephant, drawing a cart along a sunny road; gone is the Seminole Indian camp and the alligator farm, where buried alligators answer to a guttural Indian call, and come to the surface like a pack of dogs.

Gone, indeed, is almost everything, including letters, telegrams, newspapers, movies, and the trunks that have not arrived. Apparently the house-boat is in the open ocean. Liners evading the Gulf Stream by traveling south to landward of it seem only a mile away. But the house-boat travels on an even keel, in water so shallow that

the marl and grasses of the bottom are always in sight.

Anxious leanings over the rail by the newcomers, looking for sea-cows and fish. A donning of nautical caps and rubber-soled shoes by the men. Distribution of hooks and bureau-drawer space by the women. At the wheel is the Captain, blue-uniformed and brass-buttoned, following the trail of the channel like a dog on a scent. Slung on board (this is not the technical word) are the fishing canoes. Trailing behind are the launches. In the galley is the cook, cooking. Beside him is the messman, cooking for the crew. The launch man is keeping an eye on the launches. The fish guide, Joe, is mending a net. The crew are asleep or polishing brass. Sometimes both. The owner is below, paying bills.

An occasional porpoise rises and rolls, his sides tawny in the sunlight. Skipjacks, resembling baby swordfish, scuttle like skipping stones across the surface. Portuguese men of war, their iridescent bladders purple, rose, and blue, float about, their stinging tentacles waving underneath them, and near them the tiny bluefish which seek them for protection. To port, on an island, is the old Florida light.

Joe is mending his cast net with a bobbin, and while he knots it, he tells the story of his grandfather and the now abandoned lighthouse.

In 1846, Joe's grandfather, a castaway Spanish sailor, was the lighthouse keeper. The lighthouse was of brick, very high, with wooden stairs inside. At the top was the great lamp, set on a flooring of iron plate. All the travel to and from the Indies watched for the light.

Then, one night, came the Seminole Indians, putting out in canoes from their palmetto-thatched huts in the swamps, huts raised on poles above the miasmic ground, and consisting only of floor and roof. The Seminoles were on the war path, and they ravaged the Keys thoroughly, but their greatest rage was against the white man's light tower.

The keeper was up with the lamp, with a negro helper, when the Seminoles came. They set fire to the wooden stairs inside, and the smoke and heat were terrible. The iron plate at the top became red-hot. The negro put his head outside to breathe, and was shot and killed. The interior of the tower became a seething mass of flame, and down below the Indians began to drive stakes into the outer wall and to climb up foot by foot.

Joe's grandfather lay with the body of the dead negro between him and the red-hot iron plate, and heard the Indians driving their stakes and climbing, climbing. At that moment certainly no life insurance company would have accepted him as a risk. But a ship at sea had seen the flames and

turned toward shore. The Indians left, the fire died, and—there was Joe, sitting at his cast net.

Little islands and big islands, visions of beauty to look at, but actually only mangrove swamps arising out of the very sea itself, and occupied only by fishing birds, mosquitoes, sandflies, and coons. The coon is everywhere. Trappers move from island to island collecting them and setting fresh traps. Their boats are hung with boards on which are stretched the skins, fur down, to dry. In quiet creeks or channels the coons can be seen swimming across, or heard rustling among the mangroves, impatient of the intruder. They are the only animal life the islands can boast.

The house-boat moves along, now in some narrow channel, where one can almost touch the trees on either side, again in open water. Its life goes on, unchanged by the fact that it is in motion. Only dinner has a fixed hour; breakfast and luncheon depend on the fishing plans. On days when the launches are to cross the bar and fish outside in the open ocean, luncheon and thermos bottles are taken, and an early start is made. Inside fishing is more leisurely. One runs back for food, goes out again.

And every return from any trip is awaited with interest by the crew.

"What luck?" says the Captain.

"Saw a few," is the proper response, until the fish-well in the boat is opened, and the weighing scales are produced.

On a morning in late January of this year, Joe and I went out for bonefish. Do not be misled by the name of the bonefish. The unimaginative creature who first christened this fish deserves to be turned into a minnow and forever pursued by a shark. The bonefish is the romance of southern waters, elusive, mysterious, spirited, beautiful, and lightning in motion. Men once bitten by the bonefish craze are never the same again, and spend their lives in a canoe with a hermit crab at one end of a line and themselves at the other. They become stealthy, because only by stealth can they succeed, cramped, leather-skinned, and silent. Their idea of Paradise is an endless shoal, the tide just at the turn, and innumerable bonefish sticking their noses down to feed and thus showing an inch or two of tail above the surface.

One fishes for bonefish with hermit crabs. But no sympathy need be wasted on the crab. The hermit crab finds an animal in a shell, eats the animal, backs into the shell, and thereafter carries it around with him. He has even been seen, during a housing stringency, thus carrying around the bowl of an old clay pipe.

On this particular morning I regret to say that the attitude of the boat was one of outspoken scepticism. Indeed, I have reason to believe that certain individuals backed this scepticism with coin of the realm: It was too late in the day; I would find that compared to a trout a bonefish was chain lightning; I wouldn't see a bonefish; I would not get one if I did. And, I rise to remark, without Joe I would not have.

Joe is a bonefisherman. For six years at one time he and a New York banker fished for bonefish. They fished until the banker, who was growing old, had to be lifted in and out of the canoe, and only stopped when even that ceased to be possible. Bonefishing, one perceives, may be the strongest passion in a life, surviving everything else.

Our preparations were simple. Joe's consisted of the tackle and a pail full of hermit crabs; mine of a layer of stearate of zinc in solution smeared over the countenance and resulting in a whitish mask, with an additional precautionary layer of talcum powder. This make-up, with a hat pulled low and a pair of black sun-proof goggles, is one reason for no photographs of me in fishing garb, accompanying this chapter.

Reaching the shoals, we sat, the canoe floating in about eight inches of water, and watched the fish warily feeding and moving out to sea. We

inched toward them; they rushed off. A pair here, a trio there, they were instantly aware of us; a scrape on the bottom of the boat, and they were gone. I had a terrible conviction that if I sneezed at a critical moment, Joe would turn me out of the canoe and go home.

Joe, meanwhile, had been giving me my instructions. A bonefish, it appeared, did not take the bait and go off with it; not, that is, at first! It picks it up so delicately that only the faintest vibration is felt, and it can eject the crab quicker than the average fisherman can strike.

Finally something happened. The line did not move, but it delicately twittered.

"Strike!" yelled Joe. "Strike!"

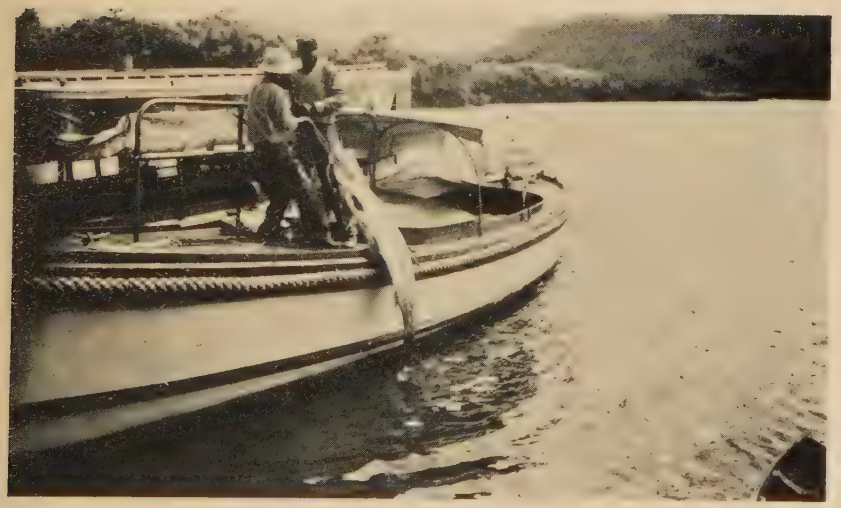
And I struck. Instantly something else happened. I put my thumb on the line, and it was burned through my glove.

"Let him have it," Joe screamed. "Let him run."

It was not necessary to tell me this. I was letting him run. He could have run back to Miami, as far as I was concerned. But I kept a death grip on the rod, which did not belong to me, and Joe sat back and grinned.

Nothing is more callous than the attitude of her male associates to the woman who has hooked a fish and is using muscles she did not know she

TYPICAL FLORIDA FISHING



REX BEACH LANDING A BIG TARPON

REX BEACH AND THE AUTHOR ON THE CHAGRES
Wouldn't you know the big fish was caught by Rex?

had. "Take it!" she begs. "My hands are gone. I can't gain an inch on it."

"It's your fish," says the male. "You *can't* lose it. From the chances it's had to get away, it's swallowed the darned thing."

She gets the fish in, gaining slowly one painful inch after another; it sees the boat and is off again; the line whistles, the reel is hot, and she is dying on her feet.

"It must weigh fifty pounds," she gasps. "It's going to take me in after him."

The male smiles.

She braces the end of the rod against her body; it is boring through her. The male lights a cigarette. Twenty minutes, an hour, may go by. The gain is real now. The fish is near the boat. Its rushes are short. At last it comes in and is lifted, by a finger in the gill, or a gaff, over the side. And it weighs only six and a half pounds!

I got two bonefish that morning, and Joe got one. Swollen with sunburn and triumph, we went back to the big boat.

"Any luck," said the Captain, as we drew in.

"*Saw* a few," said Joe.

Every fisherman has his secrets. The Captain had a snapper hole, and wild horses would not have drawn its location from him, save to the Commodore and the Commodore's Lady. The

launch man had another. Joe, of course, is a safe deposit vault full of mysterious knowledge. But our great snapper catch this winter was more or less of an accident.

Cruising leisurely through a narrow channel one afternoon, I on the upper deck, as usual looking for a sea-cow, and the rest of the party napping, reading, or playing solitaire, the young college man on a vacation who was the launch man suddenly exclaimed:

"Great heavens! Look at the snapper!"

We looked. Around the mangrove roots were such snapper as one dreams of, but seldom sees. The sunlight showed them plainly—papa and mamma snappers and the little ones, out for a bask in the sun. The Commodore came and looked, and being the proper sort of Commodore, who never has to be any place at any given time, ordered the anchor down a quarter of a mile beyond, and the boats out.

"Of course," he warned me, "you never know about snapper. Probably we'll never get a fish. But if you want to try——!"

Did I want to try! There was nothing of any importance in my life just then but those fish. Gone were family and friends, plays, books, clothes, politics. And this, I take it, is the great advantage of those who like to fish over those who do not—the psychological value of the sport.

For, at the sight of even so much as a fin, the born fisherman wipes his mind clear of everything else. It becomes merely an empty slate on which to chalk the least nibble, the faintest vibration of the line.

We went back, without making those preparations with which we were wont to face the glare of the sun on tropical waters. Without our black glasses. Without our zinc masks. Without those veils which, wrapped around our necks, were to enable us to wear evening dresses later on without apology. We went back.

At the first cast under the overhanging trees, what appeared to be a twelve-hundred-pound sea-cow took my bait and to all appearances started up the bank and across the island with it. Not all my strength enabled me to gain an inch of the line.

"You let him get into the roots," Joe said in a pained voice. "He's wrapped the line around them."

"What was it?" I asked, as he jerked the line until it broke.

"A snapper."

"*That* a snapper!" I said indignantly. "It was a shark, Joe."

Joe said nothing and put on a new hook.

I have before me now, on a scrap of brown paper, the list of the catch from our three canoes

in the next hour and a half. The Captain and the Commodore, in one of them, came in proudly with four fish, averaging a pound and a half. But the Commodore's Lady and the launch man had two of seven and a half pounds each, while the largest Joe and I brought in weighed only six and a half.

The total catch was over a hundred pounds of excellent food fish. Estimated in foot-pounds, the energy required to land those fish would probably have carried one of the large blocks to the top of the pyramids. For the resistance of a fighting mangrove snapper determined to wrap a fishing line around a clump of roots is equaled only by his ability, nine times out of ten, to do it.

It was that night that I dreamed I had landed the mermaid from Cincinnati.

From what has gone before, it will be seen that to get fish in Florida waters, it is necessary to know where to go. It is entirely useless to cast out a baited hook and then wait for something to attach itself to it. In a great sound of over fifty square miles of water, for instance, there are ideal conditions for the sea trout, or spotted weakfish; the proper bottom of grass, in which they hide to strike up at a trolling lure as it passes above them. But the fish guide knows that in only one small area of that bottom are there trout. In one sound, for instance, an intensive series of

experiments limited the trout to an area of about a half-mile each way. It is as incomprehensible as why people gravitate to certain regions or cities.

But fish are incomprehensible in many ways. They have more than instinct. They have a low grade of intelligence. The higher the grade of that intelligence, the harder they are to get. Thus, one may pull in one mackerel after another, using as a bait the conventional bit of white muslin through the eye of the hook, and they will fight each other for the next cast. But trout and other higher grade fish grow wary in a short time. Take a few out of a pool, and in an incredibly short time one can almost see them making the fish equivalent to the thumb to nose gesture.

Do fish communicate? Have they some method of warning each other? Sometimes I wonder. One has only to notice the alacrity with which the first mangrove snapper takes the bait, and following his capture, the rapidity with which an entire creekful of them loses appetite! One can figure a small and active messenger cruising about and flying some signal of danger, and the others swiftly withdrawing into their houses, and closing the shutters, and being not at home to anybody until the dangerous time is past.

Certainly there are fish which sing. Sitting in a boat one day near a famous pelican island,

where thousands of birds with the oversized beaks make their homes, I was startled to hear, from far away, a curious, minor double note. Almost instantly it was taken up elsewhere. "Ca-dook, Ca-dook, Dook," it came from every direction. And suddenly it came from underneath the boat itself.

"What is it?" I whispered.

"Fish."

"Fish? Singing?"

"Cadukes."

Now, on going back to the big boat, I immediately looked up that word. Ka-dook, ca-dook, ka-duke, ca-duke. Nobody knew how it was spelled. There is no such word; there should be no such fish. But there is, for I got one.

Fishing for anything that might come along, in a shady, little channel, one day, I pulled up a hideous, little, warty fish of a reddish brown in color, and almost dropped him when he ca-dooked in my hands. We gently unhooked him and put him back, and so far as I know he is still cadooking with might and main some sixty miles south of the mainland of Florida, in the Gulf of Mexico.

Joe maintains that the sea-cow moos and told the following story, after we had passed one moving with dignity along the bottom of a narrow estuary. A sea-cow is a mammal, by the

way. It has the fleshy lips of a cow, flippers like a seal, a thick hide, and a broad, fishy tail which is placed horizontally and moves up and down.

Joe—before the days of the penalty, of course! —had captured a calf and roped it to the boat. After a time he realized that the cow was following.

"She followed us four miles," said Joe, "bellowing and carrying on something awful, and——"

"Bellowing, Joe?"

"Sure. You ought to have heard her."

"A real bellow like a cow?"

"Well, it's a fish, too," he admitted. "But she was calling to it all right. Got on my nerves so I let the calf go."

Rather touching, that picture of manatee love, I think. The mother cow begging, and being given her calf, and then hurrying off with it to some cool depth, there to suckle it and ponder over the strange actions of those who live in that mysterious element, the air.

As time went on, all sorts of strange creatures reached our decks. One day I came back to find laid out in a row a dozen or two of those great conch shells, in which I had been told as a child that I could hear the sea. They contained a great, meaty mussel which the colored members of the crew, Nassau negroes, regarded as a delicacy.

There came stone crabs, hideous and delicious, known to Cuban tourists as Moro crabs; crawfish, more delicate than lobster; parrot fish, not edible, blue and green, their heads uncannily like parrots; little fish striped like zebras and called sheepsheads; fish with teeth, with crusher jaws, with poison sacs as a means of defense; others whose safety depends on their speed, and still others, slow and sluggish, who have in shells their only protection.

Around the big boat at evening came schools of tiny, silver moonfish, flat and round, to be hauled in for the mere dropping of a tiny, baited hook. And with them skipjacks, as long and thin as a table knife, and making excellent bait. At night, too, as we got down into the Gulf, came the sharks, their mouths under their chins, to pick up the refuse from the galley and any indiscreet member of the crew who might flop overboard for a swim.

We threw out a shark bait one night, with a hook the size of a smallish anchor, and got a shark. After that my enthusiasm for going overboard for a swim suffered an extreme setback. Even the reassuring statement that a shark has to turn over on his back to bite one did not relieve my apprehensions. He *can* turn over. And long attempt on the part of a solicitous family to teach

mother the Australian crawl stroke has not added a mile a month to her speed in the water.

And after observing, this winter, hung up to bleach on the after deck, the jawbones of a leopard shark, two feet and more across, I told my host with considerable firmness that I had forgotten my bathing-suit.

If nature has handicapped the shark by putting its mouth below its chin, it has done everything else for it. This particular jawbone had about a dozen rows of reserve teeth, so to speak. If anything happened to one of its saw-toothed, razor-edged weapons one of the reserve teeth simply rose and took its place.

Somehow, one often perceives that nature is kinder to her wild creatures than to man. What a boon these self-rising teeth would be, in a day when one's only molars are drawn to cure everything from gout to melancholia!

Florida fishing divides itself into two sorts, inside and outside. Bonefish, snapper, mackerel, turbot, trout, and a dozen other varieties of edible and small game fish are found inside the reefs and islands. They are caught with the undivided attention of the fisherman.

Outside is different. Very, very different. The man who wrote "Roll on, thou deep blue

ocean, roll," gave it a totally unnecessary permission. The deep blue ocean just naturally rolls and can not help it. And so does anything on it.

And there is another angle to this outside fishing. A fairly substantial thirty-five-foot launch goes through a curious shrinking process as it goes out to sea. This begins about a half-mile from shore, so that at ten miles out, to the novice, the boat appears to have become about the size of a bathtub, and rather less substantial.

I do not really get seasick. On one or two of my ocean voyages I have had liver attacks, which had some of the symptoms of the other thing, but I do not get seasick. But I have been out on the reef, with an enormous fish trying to pull me out of the boat, when I acknowledged to a certain indifference as to whether it succeeded or not.

But, of course, the great sport of Florida is outside fishing. Think of the possibilities of it! Think of that gentleman who went out for a day's casual sport and got a thirty-thousand-pound fish! A fish, not a whale! I have forgotten all the details but the weight, but at first, of course, the fish got him, boat and all. It was only after it had wearied of dragging the outfit all over the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico that they got it near the shore, and turned the guns of a fort on it, or something, and put it in a museum.

To show the chances of the thing, we were out about seven miles one day, kingfishing, when a young lady whom I shall call Sarah, because it is her name, hooked a sailfish. She thought at first that she had caught a power launch of the fishing fleet, which was all around us. But the fish leaped, which a launch would not do, and while the crew held Sarah from going overboard, she fought her catch. It was probably eight feet long—probably, because it finally got away—and superbly graceful as it leaped. But the tackle was light, and Sarah had only a blister on her hand to show for the incident.

On another occasion, fishing for something small and dainty for dinner, this same young lady hooked a seventy-pound sting-ray. The sting-ray is unlike most sea creatures in that he carries his weapons not fore, but aft, being equipped with a barbed tail of extreme velocity and power. He differs from them in other ways, also. He looks, lying on a shoal, more like the head of a barrel than a fish, and he carries, except his eyes, all his important works underneath.

Under the circumstances, to take a sting-ray into a small boat would have the immediate result of sending overboard the people in it. The approved method is to bring the ray near the boat, and while he is occupied by trying to make a hole in it with his tail and his attention is thus dis-

tracted, to cut the line and make him a present of the hook.

Inside, one sees now and then a market fisherman, his little boat kicking along to the accompaniment of a one-lunged exhaust, his gear piled high on the tiny deck, his lines trailing behind him. When he has made his catch he takes it to some fish house along the shore, gets his pay for it, and starts out again.

Some of them do not set foot on land for months at a time. They live their solitary lives, cooking on a tiny stove, eating the most meager fare, earning just enough to keep body and soul together. The shabby boat is all the home they have, and often only the day's catch stands between them and hunger.

They take their little boats outside and join their more prosperous brothers of the fishing fleet, and when the feeble engine breaks down, they are sure of aid and sometimes a tow.

Kingfishing is one of the market fisherman's best revenue bringers. Kingfish are delicious food, and when they are running well, the fleet prospers.

The fleet itself, on a bright day out at sea, is a picturesque thing. Sailboats, generally with a small auxiliary engine, and launches of all sizes and conditions, move about until the keen eyes of the fishermen perceive that one boat has found

the fish. When, as in one instance, the fish had been lost for an hour and we picked them up, I looked up from the first fish to see that, although the fleet was a mile away, it was already under way toward us. Every boat was bow on toward us, and every boat had a bone in its teeth.

Before the second fish was in there were eighteen boats around us, circling and crossing, combing every inch of the sea.

This is no song of triumph over the great fishes of the deep. Let those who like it rock and roll on the bosom of the deep, and bring in their huge spoil to rot upon a deck or wharf. Or let them have them mounted, and thus take the pitiful corpses home, to find that the only wall space they will fit is over the drawing-room mantel, and that the woman of the house firmly refuses to have them there.

But it is a little eulogy of quiet pools along the margins of green islands, where, as some one says, the hand of man has never set foot. Of blue and white baby herons, standing awkwardly on overhanging branches, or huddled in nests and shrieking for food. Of trees full of pelicans, who catch their fish, eat it, partially digest it, and then regurgitate it into the throats of their young. Of gulls, who will swoop from an incredible height onto a trolling bait, and occasionally thus commit suicide. Of two cranes on a sand

bar, fighting bitterly over a fish. Of water as blue as the sky and bluer, yet so clear that the life below is plainly visible. Of jelly fish that look like lacy boudoir caps.

Looking down at the bottom is to look into a new world. But these places must be found. Only here and there are these sea aquariums, where the very plants are living animals. Stealing up on them in a canoe, one may find anything. Once, two years ago, we almost went over a sea otter. Again, this last winter, taking off into a tiny, six-foot waterway that led through the mangroves, Joe and I came across a tiny pool some thirty feet across and entirely roofed with green. It was literally full of half-grown tarpon, quite fearless and indeed extremely curious about us.

Little crabs edge sideways along the bottom, frightfully intent on something or other; bright-colored fish move lazily about in the sunlight or gather in sociable groups. A big grouper, or jew-fish, striped like a tiger and weighing perhaps seventy pounds, lies lazily in a shadow. All is peace.

Then comes the raid. An ominous black shadow comes shooting into the pool, a shark or barracuda. The faster fish escape; the slow ones have no chance. In a moment of time it is gone again, but the little, sociable groups are broken up. The Serpent has entered Paradise.

From all these excursions one returns to the house-boat. Like those pack-train camping trips of ours, it moves only in the daytime. But life on a house-boat differs materially from the fresh-camp-every-night idea on land. The mere matter of having a chair to sit on after a hard day is a fundamental difference. Also, of course, a real bed to lie in. And nobody on a house-boat ever wakens in the middle of the night to find a horse standing across him, trying to eat his pillow, or that a porcupine, which loves leather, has eaten off the top of a riding boot.

No. One goes back to the boat and takes a hot salt bath, because the fresh water is running low, and puts on one's best clothes, although the boat may be out in the Gulf of Mexico, with the nearest possible caller at Key West or Cuba. And then one eats like a ravening wolf. True, when the fish course comes on, the discussion as to whether this is your fish or the Commodore's may cause a certain qualm; as when, during a certain family dinner, when a pet hen had finally been cooked, the mere mention of her name, which was Nellie, sent all the young Rineharts away from the table, stricken and supperless.

Then comes the evening. The sun has not set; it has melted into the sea. The stars come out, enormously large and very near. Sitting in deck chairs forward, there comes from the sea at the

other end of the boat various splashes as the crew go overboard, a loud one for the Captain, who is heavy, lesser ones for lesser men. No screams following, we learn that no sharks are about. Somebody mentions bridge.

On a mild evening which promised a moon, I asked the Commodore if I might go night fishing up a certain creek.

"You'll get plenty of bites," he said. "Mosquito bites!"

"I can wear a veil."

He reflected. "Well," he said, "you've been fishing so steadily that I understand the crew are going to strike unless we put them on shifts! I hadn't thought of a night shift, but—!" He eyed me thoughtfully. "Do you keep this up at home, or do you sleep now and then?"

There was a twinkle in his eye when he started me off. I could see it, even through layers of veils, but I had a look of grim determination in my own eye, which escaped him. For I understood, unofficially, that the crew were making bets that I would remain between those mosquito-infested islands less than an hour. The average wager, I believe, was fifteen minutes.

That was at eight o'clock.

Sometime after midnight, pulling in a snapper I could not see from water I could not see either, we heard a sudden tut-tut from the far-away

boat. They were sending for us! Fifteen minutes later a rather disgruntled Captain, in his uniform over his pajamas, stopped the launch, muttered something to the effect that if some folks didn't need any sleep, others did, and took us back.

There had not been a mosquito.

If Florida fishing were limited to those who can afford house-boats, or are lucky enough to have friends who can, this article would have a narrow appeal. But it is not. There are many ways to enjoy it. Close to Miami is very fine fishing. At Long Key there is an excellent hotel, with cottages scattered through a great grove of palm trees, trees which grow out of white sand which is apparently swept smooth with a broom every morning.

All the Florida resorts have fish guides with boats, who will go out for a morning, a day, or a week. A group of congenial people can charter a fully-equipped house-boat, and at less cost than at many hotels spend in cruising any length of time they may desire.

Florida has ceased to be only the rich man's playground. With the beginning of cold weather in the north there starts a procession of cars toward the sun and warmth, and in this procession the lowly Ford largely predominates. Auto-

mobile camping grounds have been established. Food, especially the local fruits and fish, is cheap and delicious.

I have seen, parked along the main business street of Miami, an inexpensive van built on a Ford chassis and containing everything from a real bed to an ice-water cooler. Lifted off, and put on a keel instead of wheels, the owner could himself possess a house-boat, and cruise among the Keys.

THE END